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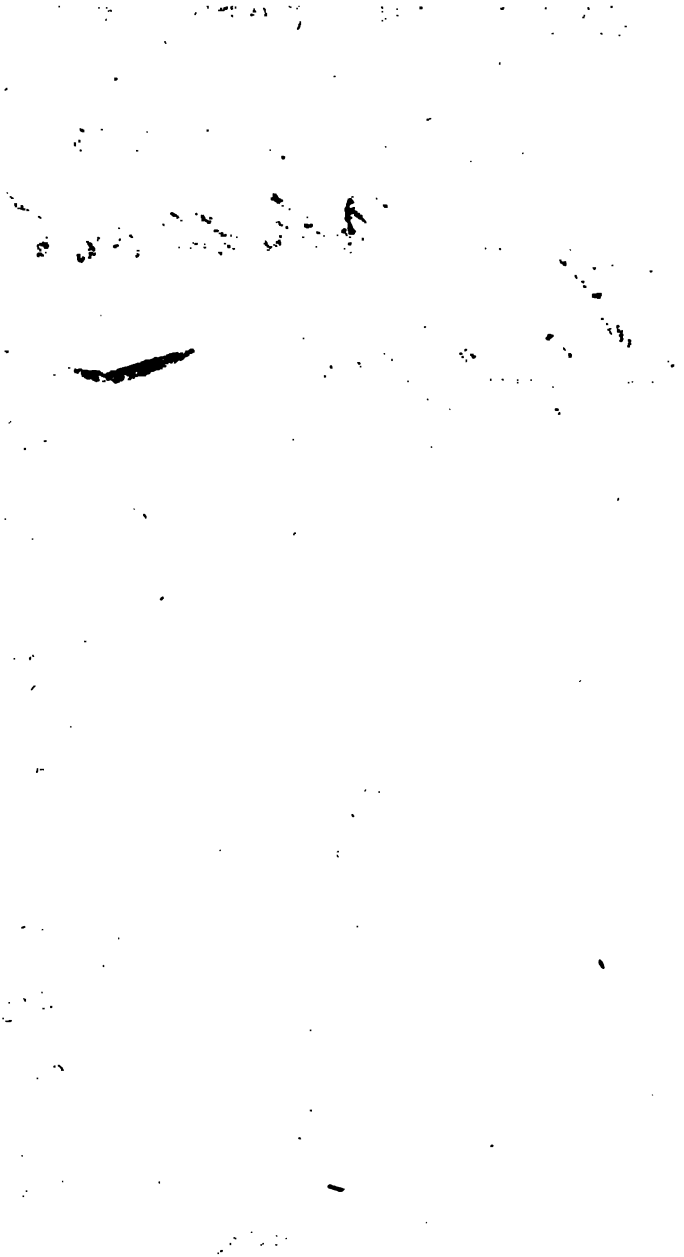
George L. Abbott, 30th
11th Sept. 1916



FAITH NO FANCY:

OR, A

TREATISE OF MENTAL IMAGES.

DISCOVERING

THE VAIN PHILOSOPHY AND VILE DIVINITY OF A LATE PAMPHLET INTITLED, MR. ROBE'S FOURTH LETTER TO MR. FISHER:

AND SHEWING

THAT AN IMAGINARY IDEA OF CHRIST AS MAN, (WHEN SUPPOSED TO BELONG TO SAVING FAITH, WHETHER IN ITS ACT OR OBJECT). IMPORTS NOTHING BUT IGNORANCE, ATHEISM, IDOLATRY, GREAT FALSHOOD, AND GROSS DELUSION.

BY RALPH ERSKINE, A. M.

Minister of the gospel at Dunfermline.

Who was very confidently, but very ignorantly, charged with blasphemy and heresy in the said pamphlet, for condemning that imaginary doctrine.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

Relating to part of the late writings of the Rev. Messrs. Willison and Currie, especially touching some points of gospel doctrine, injured by their defence of the Act of Assembly, 1722, &c.

TOGETHER WITH A

SERMON, titled, *The true Christ no New Christ*, and some other Extracts from the same author; with Mr. Fisher's *Review of Cambuslang*, which have an immediate connection with the work, and were never before published with it.

Nunquam periclitatur religio nisi inter reverendissimos. LUTHER.

PHILADELPHIA:

Printed by WILLIAM M'CULLOCH, No. 50, Chesnut street.

February, 1805.

6536

THE PREFACE,

SHEWING THE OCCASION, NATURE, AND DESIGN OF THE FOLLOWING TREATISE.

I Acknowledge the ſubject I am now called in providence to treat, is very myſterious, ſpeculative and ſublime, in ſo far as it relates to that glorious object of faith, an incarnate God, or God in our nature; which is one of the higheſt ſubjects of divinity, and which I am obliged to handle in oppoſition to what my opponent calls *an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man.* Which idea neither belongs to any branch of ſolid philoſophy nor ſound divinity, nor hath it any concern with true religion; and, in ſo far as it hath nothing of the divinity of Chriſt, nor of his Godhead and perſonality in it, can lead no ſoul toward the proper object of divine adoration. The ſubject therefore occaſions my thoughts to leap from a very great height to a very great depth, and, as it were, from one ſphere to another; and ſo, up and down by turns, from that wherein faith and ſpiritual underſtanding moves, in order to ſee God in our nature, and ſpiritual objects, to that wherein ſenſe, fancy and imagination moves, and can ſee nothing but a mere man, or a corporeal object.

The author I have to do with, ſeems, as will appear in our progreſs, very much diſpoſed to extenuate the errors and corruptions of this church, which the Aſſociate Preſbytery give teſtimony againſt. But, if among other things, the ſupreme Godhead and proper Divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as God equal with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, when it was openly attacked, was not duly witneſſed for in the judicatures, there may be reaſon to fear, that the diſhonors done to the Mediator in his Deity, as well as in his other royal prerogatives as King in Zion, may have provoked God to leave many of this generation to follow divers and ſtrange doctrines, and to give them up to ſtrong delaſions and vain imaginations. Of which one of the moſt groſs and dangerous is the *imaginary idea of Chriſt as man;* which is a conception including, at the utmoſt extent of it, no other view of him but merely in his humanity. God hath given us the glaſs of his word, where, if he alſo give us the eye of faith, we may ſee Chriſt, our incarnate God. Mr. Robe has told us of another glaſs, namely, that of an imaginary idea, wherein we can only ſee him as man. And, whether this is helpful to the other, is part of the inquiry I am to make in the following treatiſe. Mr. Robe, in the title, and in the ſecond page of his letter, undertakes to diſcover the fraud and falſhood of the Appendix of my letter, intitled, "Fraud and Falſehood diſcovered." How he hath managed this undertaking, the ſequel may evidence. Only, if he had found out in that Appendix ſomething of yet greater conſequence than fraud and falſhood, and had he been very ſure and confident that there was hereſy and blaſphemy vented therein, then I think theſe would have deſerved a room in capital letters on the title page, that *all readers might be alarmed,* and ſtirred up to ſearch into, and avoid

the hereſy and blaſphemy which he is pleaſed to diſtinguiſh with capital letters elſewhere in this performance of his, namely, *That the human nature of Chriſt is no part of the object of faith*; and *that it profiteth nothing*, page 73: and again, page 47, *That the human nature of the glorious Redeemer is no part of the object of faith.* The charge ſeems very high, if, as he alledges, I have in terms aſſerted the above poſitions. But I hope to ſhow, that he hath failed in his proof; and that, inſtead of finding out hereſy and blaſphemy, he hath fallen into the mire of groſs idolatry, making ſome other thing than the living and true God, the proper object of faith and worſhip. It is my province at preſent, not only to defend myſelf againſt his falſe charge, but eſpecially to clear and vindicate the truth which he has darkened and perverted: I declare my reſolution, when I wrote and publiſhed that letter, intitled, Fraud and Falſhood diſcovered, never to contend for the laſt word, but only for the truth: and therefore it was, that though after the publication thereof, I ſaw a letter of Mr. Webſter's, directed to me, written with ſo much haſte and diſpatch, as ſeemed to import a vain ambition to have it bear the name of a ready anſwer; yet I gave no reply thereto, not only becauſe that letter was no anſwer to mine, almoſt in any part, except the title page of it, which happened to be advertiſed by the printer, for certain reaſons of his, five or ſix weeks before the book itſelf was publiſhed; which gave Mr. Webſter ſufficient time for moſt of his animadverſions; ſo that there was little occaſion for ſuch boaſting as appeared therein of the quick production thereof: but alſo I gave no return to it, becauſe, while the whole ſubſtance of my pamphlet ſtood unanſwered thereby, I had nothing to give a return to, but partly ſome groſs miſrepreſentations of facts, which it was little matter whether any believed to be true or not; and partly ſome flights of idle banter, which deſerved no moment of any man's precious time to write upon, nor would well become the gravity of a miniſter to employ his time and pen about; while alſo any thing there objected, that ſeemingly deſerved conſideration, was obviated evidently in my pamphlet, ſo as any one that pleaſed to read it again, might ſee his letter anſwered; and eſpecially, while no article of divine truth, nor, conſequently, the glory of God, was immediately concerned therein. But, now that I find Mr. Robe hath not only made himſelf a falſe witneſs againſt me, which I think I ſhould eaſily bear with, when I know I have truth on my ſide, and, conſequently, am reproached for the name of Chriſt; but when his bold and arrogant attack upon me imports in it what ought to be of far greater concern, even a bearing falſe witneſs againſt God, and his truth as it is in Jeſus; therefore I judge the glory of God, and the credit of truth require, that I ſee this matter in a clearer light. And, ſince providence hath put this work in my hand, I undertake it, not ſo much for the ſake of divines, or the learned that are well ſeen in divinity, among whoſe hands I could freely let Mr. Robe's letter paſs without any anſwer, becauſe my very words, as they ſtand cited by him, will anſwer for themſelves, to any intelligent perſon that underſtands divinity; but rather for the ſake of the more inadvertent and inconſiderate, that may be ready to have their minds corrupted by ſuch ſtrange doctrine, as that of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, as if that belonged any way to the faith of this great myſtery of godlineſs, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*; which lies not within *the ſphere of imagination.* The ſubject therefore I am to treat, how-*ever intricate, yet may* be very profitable, and of the greateſt conſe-*quence for time and* eternity, as it relates to ſaving faith, in oppoſition *to deluſive fancy* and imaginary notions.

As to that part of the title of this book, viz. *A treatise of mental images*, I hope the learned reader will not mistake the meaning, by supposing me to think, that images were subjectively in the mind or understanding, which I own is not properly the seat thereof; but I call them mental objectively, as they are presented by the imagination to the mind: and so by *mental* understand no more but internal images, as distinguished from external, and consequently much of the same import with fancies, in the former part of the title, viz. *Faith no Fancy*, both which are internal. Yet I chused to call them mental, rather than internal images, because as the mind is the proper seat of faith, so these images are especially hurtful and opposite to faith, as they are mental, or as they operate upon, disturb, distract, and darken the mind, diverting it, with these imaginary pictures, from viewing and fixing upon the proper objects of faith.

I hope those who have been the ordinary readers of some other writings that have come from my hand, will not be offended, but will excuse me, that in this work I have been obliged to go much out of my ordinary road of writing only upon divinity, now to treat it with a greater mixture of philosophy, than I have formerly accustomed myself unto. And, since I do not expect that all my readers will be philosophers, (though yet I would by this treatise desire to fence them against vain philosophy), I am sufficiently aware, that, though I have studied as plain, homely, and intelligible language as I could, yet the nature of the subject is such, that I fear much of it will be above the capacity of the vulgar; and that it is only those that are knowing and judicious that will be most edified by some parts of this performance, if the Lord bless it to them. The reason is, because not only is the matter in hand a very high and mysterious point in divinity, but Mr. Robe's positions about it lead to consider it with relation to the concern he thinks our natural senses, ideas and imaginations have therein: which necessarily obliges me to use some scholastic terms, philosophical arguments, and metaphysical distinctions. These I own are much out of vogue and fashion, among many in our present time. But, though the abuse of them hath led men to much vanity, error and wickedness, yet the right use of them is sometimes exceeding necessary even in divinity, especially controversial. Many that have professed no great liking to metaphysical and philosophical reasonings, have yet found themselves obliged to make use of them, in order to expose the subtil and sophistical arguments of heretics. I find Mr. Locke himself sometimes forming syllogisms in his treatise of human understanding. Even though he decries the syllogistic way of reasoning in that same book, yet he calls it the art of fencing with the little knowledge we have. The learned professor of philosophy, Heereboord, disp. page 222, shews, in several particulars, the usefulness of that part of philosophy called metaphysics, particularly in theology; and shuts up his discourse upon that head by observing, that even those who disapprove and condemn metaphysics, among whom he mentions the learned Amesius, do yet very skilfully make use of them, when the pressing objections of adversaries require it, and also on other occasions: which, says he, is a clear document and evidence, that metaphysics are exceeding necessary for a divine. To this purpose the learned Davenant, in Col. ii. 8. in many cases illustrates the great advantage and usefulness of philosophy, and the art of right reasoning, *in the matters of faith and religion*. Though we believe above reason, yet we do so neither rashly nor unreasonably. Ma-*resii reg. theol. & philos.* page 21, 25 *Verum cum vero non pugnat*, &c

hwole, but especially what relates to myself, and the attack made upon my doctrine respecting faith, in opposition to fancy. A great part of the pamphlet concerns my brother Mr. Fisher; who, if he had leisure, and thought it worth his while, is able enough to answer the violent and virulent attacks Mr. Robe makes upon, even though boasted of, as he does likewise of some of Mr. Currie's performances, as if there were no answering of them. But, if he think some writings, because unanswered, to be unanswerable, he but pleases himself with his own imaginary ideas. But so will none whose thoughts are solid, and under the government of reason and judgment.

If what I wrote formerly, and in the Appendix here reprinted, had not met with a prejudiced mind, I cannot see how any could have found such gross error therein, as Mr. Robe pretends to do. But, as he is the first that hath charged me with heterodoxy, so none will judge it, I suppose, out of my way to examine, whether he hath truly found it or not; and whether he hath therein bewrayed his own ignorance and error. When I insinuated in my letter, that, according to my information, they were not all sound divines that were the instruments and promoters of the work at Cambuslang, I had no such clear view that Mr. Robe was of that number. But now indeed I cannot see how to exclude him: for, if I mistake not, unless I could suppose that many things he hath here advanced, are merely *disputandi gratia*, or only the rash eruptions of resentment, and not his stated judgment, I cannot vindicate him from heterodoxy and idolatry both, relating to the human nature of our glorious Redeemer. And, though I am willing to suppose in charity that the former is the case, yet I do not see any such charitable supposition he expresses towards me in his whole book: which may shew how much he is under the conduct of his own spirit, or a worse, at present, when he adventures to spread among the common people, that I have vented heresy and blasphemy on this subject, and that in terms, without supposing that I may have any sound meaning in my words, and without being so fair and candid as either to notify that the charge is in his own words or terms, and not mine; or to signify, that my words might admit of the consequence he thus deduces from them. But, when he inferred from them such a dreadful charge as it is impossible to invent words more bloody and bitter than those that denominate one an heretic and a blasphemer, I can hardly think it possible, that he was so void of understanding, as truly to believe what he wrote; and so void of common sense and philosophy, as to deduce such conclusions where there were no premises to found them upon, as I am to make appear. It is certainly a great fault for any to put his own forced comment upon his adversary's words, and, when he hath made it as gross as he can, then to argue against it as his adversary's opinion. This is what Mr Robe complains is done against him, p. 3. of his letter. But, if ever a man did practice what he condemns, Mr. Robe hath done so, by racking his invention to support his delusive dreams, fancies, and imaginations relating to the human nature of Christ, and asserting, that I deny Christ's human nature to belong to the object of faith, because I refuse that Mr. Robe's imaginary notion of it belongs to that object: that is, because I will not allow the ideal fancy of it in the brain to belong to the real faith of it in the heart, therefore his absurd and monstrous inference is, That I deny it to be the object of faith. And, because I assert, that fancy or imaginary idea of Christ's humanity *is but an unprofitable* and vain imagination, hence he infers, *that I assert in terms, That* Christ's human nature is unprofitable. In *this manner I am to shew how* much needless pains he hath put himself

unto, to find out hereſy and blaſphemy, where he would never have dreamed there was any ſuch thing, if he had not conceived me to be his antagoniſt, and if he had not been ſo much drowned in the depth of deluſion, as to confound faith with fancy, and real ſupernatural and profitable knowledge with ideal, natural and vain imaginary notions. I doubt not but I have indeed inferred many things from Mr. Robe's ſtrange doctrine, which he may ſuppoſe he never thought of: but, if they are neceſſary conſequences of, and natively deducible from his new doctrine, I cannot help charging it therewith. Yea, the doctor cannot be quite innocent, whoſe doctrine is juſtly chargeable with ſupporting even the errors he profeſſes to diſclaim, becauſe he ought to ſee ſuch conſequences, and guard againſt them. Which they cannot be thought to do, who bring in new words into divinity, which frequently have new opinions lurking under them, according to the known maxim, *Qui fingit nova verba, fimul nova dogmata fingit.* Such a new term in divinity is that of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man. What new and odd doctrines are plainly implied in it, and deducible from it, may appear in the following treatiſe.

As the doctrine of imaginary ideas, in my judgment, belongs not at all to theology; ſo, if I have advanced any thing new, or unthought of by others before me, upon it, I know not. But I think every man has a liberty to give his mind and opinion, when called to it, upon any point of philoſophy, that does not contradict ſome point of divinity. Which if it do, he ought to take no liberty to admit it into religion, but rather ought to oppoſe the introduction thereof; which is part of my preſent work: wherein as oft as I give my judgment, I do it not without giving a reaſon for it; and, if it be in any matter wherein philoſophers differ among themſelves, my differing from ſome of them is therefore inevitable. However, my opponent, by declaring pointedly, that his imaginary idea can have no other object but what is merely corporeal, has made my work the more eaſy in determining that it cannot belong properly to the act or object of faith, *which is the evidence of things not yet ſeen:* yet this ſubject is ſo new and ſtrange, (I knowing no divine that hath directly treated it), and the expreſſions Mr. Robe hath upon it, are ſo many and various, that I am obliged to enlarge and extend my diſcourſe upon it to a more than ordinary length, that ſo I may endeavour to ſhut all the doors he hath opened for his doctrine of natural ſenſes and imaginary ideas, by which he would bring it forth; and make it ſet up its head among ſpiritual ſubjects, as if it were agreeable or had any conformity to the doctrine of revealed religion: while to me this doctrine of his appears diſagreeable, yea and diſgraceful to human reaſon and judgment, and much more oppoſite to divine faith, and the glorious goſpel of Chriſt.

Mr. Robe's pamphlet was publiſhed about the end of Auguſt, anno 1743. This book in anſwer to it, though it took ſome time and leiſure, as I have ſaid, was written and might have been publiſhed anno 1744. Which I mention, that the reader may not impute it to me, that the work has been kept ſo long from his view: which is owing to ſuch as were intruſted with it, and thought fit to publiſh the title page with propoſals for the printing of it; which yet was afterward managed without that ceremony.

Mr. Robe refers ſo frequently to my words in the Appendix of the foreſaid pamphlet, that it ſeems neceſſary the reader have it in his eye; and therefore I have thought fit it be here inſerted.

APPENDIX *to the Pamphlet, intitled,* Fraud and Falſehood diſcovered, *publiſhed anno* 1743.

Reverend Dear Brother,

HAD you not earneſtly deſired my thoughts and remarks upon Mr. Webſter's poſtſcript, I was diſpoſed to neglect and undervalue it, among the reſt of the public traſhes, calumnies and reproaches caſt upon me and my brethren; believing the Lord will in due time wipe them away, when the wrath of man, and even the *rabies cleri*, ſhall praiſe him: he ſits upon the floods, and is mightier than the noiſe of many waters; he rules the raging of the ſea, when the waves thereof ariſe, he ſtilleth them. However, knowing that no man but myſelf was capable to clear the facts which I have opened up, relating to the foreſaid correſpondence, I thought the glory of God, and the credit of truth, obliged me to anſwer your deſire; and the rather that I ſee alſo, what a mighty advantage the promoters of this work think they have gained, even by that fradulent copy of my letter publiſhed by Mr. Webſter. Mr. Robe calls it my memorable letter to Mr. Weſley, a miniſter of the church of England; and ſince I began to write this letter to you, I ſee the copy taken out of Mr. Webſter's poſtſcript, and reprinted at Glaſgow by itſelf, with his notes. In the title page of that copy, it is called a letter of mine, ſhewing, that ſtrugglings and outcryings, ſo as to drown the miniſter's voice, &c. are very conſiſtent with the work of the Spirit of God. Alas! what is it they are boaſting of? and what have they found in my letter for themſelves or againſt me? What is called ſtruggling in the agonies of death in Mr Weſley's letter to me, is plainly aſcribed to the devil in my letter to him. What they call outcryings, ſo as to drown the miniſter's voice, is in my letter to him judged to be the noiſy part that is acted eſpecially by thoſe that are neither ſolid nor judicious; and hence I ſeldom ever heard any ſuch clamorous noiſe in time of public worſhip, without giving a public check to it. Mean time, for us unbiaſſed as my deliberate ſentiments are ſuppoſed to have been when I wrote that letter, if I had been writing it yeſterday, I could hardly have told my ſentiments more plainly, in oppoſition to theſe very things wherein they judge they had me upon their ſide.

I ſee myſelf deſigned in the title page of that foreſaid copy, Miniſter of the Aſſociate Congregation of Dumfermline; and I am ready to apprehend that an enemy hath done it: for it is eaſy to ſee, that as this way of deſigning me, imports a denying of my ſtanding paſtoral relation to the whole of this pariſh, and thus a juſtifying the violent meaſures that have brought about this Aſſociate ſituation; ſo, how rank it ſmells of a ſinful compliance with the defections of the day, and how much it tends to harden ſome in their neglect and contempt of the only lawful and ſettled miniſtry they have in this place, is eaſy to demonſtrate. But, alas! many that would be thought friends to a reformation work, are lifting up hammers and axes againſt it, when they do not know or conſider they are doing ſo. 'Tis true, they pretend they are only ſet againſt the way and manner wherein we manage our appearance for reformation: but, till once they put hand to

the same work in another or a better way and manner, they give evidence, that it is the cause itself, and not our manner of witnessing for it they oppose. 'Tis easy to see how Mr. Webster and others write on Christ's kingly office and government, in such a general strain, as would agree as much with the principles of loose Sectarians, as of true Presbyterians. What shall we think of the present established church of Scotland, when these among them that sometime professed to be contending within doors for the same reformation principles that we were appearing for without doors, are now betraying the cause of Presbytery; and, under a pretence of religion, and a being as zealous as others for the kingly government of Christ, are busy pulling the royal pearls out of his crown?

The present work so much magnified, I cannot but fear is also promoted by some that seem to be favouring of a deistical spirit. I see Mr. Robe, in his second letter to Mr. Fisher, (which seems to be more bulky than the rest of his continuations, and to smell of a different strain in some places from his ordinary), citing with approbation some words of Mr. Edward's sermon; and therein I see very great seeming regard paid to the scripture, as the great and standing rule, an infallible and sufficient rule. It would seem any notable epithet may be given it, provided it be not called the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God. This good old way of speaking with respect to the ancient Protestant doctrine of the perfection of the scripture as the only rule of faith and practice, seems to be going out of fashion. I confess I am not perfectly pleased with their testimony to the present extraordinary work of the Spirit of God, whose principles tend any way to the disparagement of the word of God; nor yet their testimony, who take advantage from that work, to despise and disparage a public testimony for the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of his house, appointed in that word. While our opposers in the establishment make this providence a rebuke from heaven to us, and an appearance of God for them, against us and our testimony, it deserves consideration, whether they be borrowing God's weapons to fight against his cause among our hands, and whether it bears not some resemblance to Rabshakeh's blasphemy, *Isa.* xxxvi. 10. *Am I now come up without the Lord against this land to destroy it? the Lord said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.* Our Lord hath warned us sufficiently, that they who persecute his people and slay his witnesses, *shall think they do God's service*, and *say, Let the Lord be magnified, that we may see it: the Lord arise!* John xvi. 2. Isa. lxvi. 5. Micah iii. 10. 11. 12.

The unbiassed regard of the Associate Presbytery to the cause of reformation among their hands, appears even in a special circumstance, wherein yet they are reproached, as if they were now appearing against Mr. Whitefield and his extraordinary work, because the success and spreading influence of it tends, say they, to make our interest among the people to sink, and to draw them away from us: whereas Mr. Whitefield was cast off by the unanimous consent of the brethren of the Presbytery, whenever they found his direct opposition to that cause. And this was done at his first coming to Scotland; and so before ever they knew what sort of success his ministrations could have here, and when at the same time they knew what splendid reports there were of his wonderful success abroad; yet they durst lay none of these things in balance with the public cause among their hands, which they were sure was the cause of God, or with the ancient work of reformation

sind with that worthy author on this head. Only I don't think nd or mine either can so evidently be known from these instance. Robe gives, as from another which I shall cite from the same on the parable, p 80. where, speaking of four sorts of men in out the finest thread of deceit or delusion to themselves, and link they believe when yet they have not the Son, he says, "The sort is those that close not with promises only, but with Christ s; but it is only with the image and fancy of him which they e himself. In true faith the Father reveals the Son as he is, or n reveals himself as he is; and faith hence closes with him as John vi. 40. But some there are that bear of him, hence think s is. Hence a carnal mind imagines of him, as it imagines of in a far country, and falls down to his image, and trusts to it, pends on it, and joys in it, until a man come to be converted, he, and then he sees the deceit" With this doctrine of Mr. rd's I cordially agree: and as I am ready to suppose, if it had aithfully preached in the west of Scotland, we would not perhaps eard of so many conversions there; so I think Mr Fisher has eat advantage against his antagonist on this head, while he thinks en an absurdity upon him for saying, "If we have an imaginary f Christ, we that moment think upon a false Christ." Hereupon lobe poses him with questions to this purpose, p. 11 "Is not true and real man? Had he not a true body on earth? Has he true body in heaven? Can you or any man else think upon him as he is, God man, without an imaginary idea of it? Can you of him scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified, without an nary idea of him? And can you justly think of him and receive s offered, without an imaginary idea of him as man?" And ttacks Mr. Fisher's philosophy, for supposing, that to have an nary idea of an absent man, was to see a sensible object. I can-

as an absent man? May God deliver all his people from such gross and abominable idolatry. If such views do necessarily and natively attend our faith while we ourselves are in the flesh, and have flesh as well as spirit about us; yet are not these carnal views the greatest loss and contradiction, instead of being helps and advantages to faith, or any part of it? Does not Christ forbid such carnal notions of *eating his flesh*? John vi. Such fancies and gross imaginations made his hearers there to stumble at the true Christ? therefore he says to them, verse 63 *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* Is it not the glory of the gospel, that it is the *ministration of the Spirit*? And is it not the great privilege of believers, that the Lord *manifests himself to them as he does not to the world*? The world have these carnal notions and ideas of him. But are these any ways sub unto *God's shining into the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face* (or person) *of Jesus Christ*? What *is the preaching of Christ crucified*, 1 Cor. i. 23 *to them that believe*? Is it a giving them the notion of a man upon the cross? Or, is it *the wisdom of God, and the power of God*, providing for himself a sacrifice, or setting forth to us a propitiation for our sins? So he was upon the cross, so he is now upon the throne, 1 John ii. 2 Does faith's view of an incarnate God, or of the eternal Son of God become man, by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, or the believing view of God in our nature, and clothed with our flesh; does it include, or rather does it not exclude any carnal fleshly view of him? *If the flesh profit nothing*, what a vain imagination is the view of an absent man, or a fanciful thinking, that because Christ was *made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted*, that *he is altogether such a one as ourselves*? Does an imaginary view of the man help, or rather does it not hurt and hinder the saving sight of the God man, and the believing view of the glorious person of our *Immanuel, God with us*? *The word was made flesh*; but imaginary ideas of that flesh are unprofitable fancies: we do not believe till *we behold his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John i. 14. To see Christ savingly, and without a delusion, is not to see flesh, but *God manifested in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Faith cannot fix upon Immanuel as man with us, but as God with us. It cannot see nor rest upon our nature in God, but upon God in our nature.

Can that be any part of the object of faith which is perceptible by the fancy of every man, and is obvious to natural discerning? while the Spirit of God says, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; because they are foolishness unto him: neither can they know them; for they are spiritually discerned*, 1 Cor. ii. 14 *The things of man are known by the spirit of man; but the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God* Nay, the things of God that are taught by the word and spirit of God, are indeed the objects of faith; but the things of man, which a natural man can receive, and a carnal man can discern, are the objects of sense, and of vain unprofitable imagination. As faith looks through the history of the gospel to the mystery of it, so does it through the material flesh of Christ to the mystery of God incarnate. Though we are to believe that Christ is *flesh of our flesh*, yet the flesh or humanity of Christ is only the glass or vail through which *we behold the glory of God*. The fancy that terminates on the flesh, is not only vain and unprofitable, but pernicious and prejudicial to the *faith that is of God's operation*; which, coming from God, leads to *God, and cannot* terminate upon Christ himself, but upon God in *Christ*.

Hence the object of ſaving faith is no image of Chriſt, ſeen by fancy, or imaginary ideas; but Chriſt, who is, and as he is the *image of the inviſible God*: and faith's acting upon this object, is a *ſeeing of him that is inviſible*, and no ſight of him viſibly by the bodily eye, or perceptible by natural fancy and imagination. To make faith then include any carnal conception of Chriſt's humanity, is a deep deceit and deluſion, and as remote from ſaving faith, as the image one in this part of the earth may frame in his head of the emperor of China. That part of Chriſt that is viſible, was the object of ſenſe on earth, and is the object of viſion in heaven, and may be the object of any man's fancy or imagination; but never was, nor ever will be the object of faith, but as the inviſible God is ſeen therein and thereby. Nothing ſenſible, nothing corporeal, nothing viſible can properly be the object of that faith which is *the evidence of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1. and *looks not to the things that are ſeen, but the things that are not ſeen*, 2 Cor. iv. 18. Hence our believing on Chriſt, a viſible Chriſt preſent or abſent, is not faith, but fancy, if we believe not on the inviſible God that ſent him, John xii 44. *Jeſus cried and ſaid, he that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that ſent me.* And verſe 45. *He that ſeeth me, ſeeth him that ſent me.* And chap. xiv. 9. *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* Matth. x. 40. *He that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me.* Mark ix. 37. *Whoſoever ſhall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that ſent me.*

In the act of receiving Chriſt as God-man, to have (what Mr. Robe calls) an imaginary idea of him as man, is to believe and not believe. It is to receive the perſon of Chriſt, and yet to divide the perſon. To receive the God-man is faith; but to have an imaginary idea of him as man, is not faith, but unbelief; for, as man ſimply, he is not the object of faith, but of ſenſe or fancy. It is a doing what Chriſt forbids; as he did to Mary, *Touch me not*; for it is a mere mental handling of his body: otherwiſe why does Mr. Robe ſpeak of his being revealed and offered as God-man, and of receiving him as offered; and yet thereupon ſay, "Can you then juſtly think upon him without an imaginary idea of him as man," ſince he cannot extend that idea to the perſon of the God-man?

Hence one might aſk Mr. Robe, Can he, or any man elſe, have an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, and yet that ſame moment think upon him really as he is, God-man? Unleſs Mr. Robe's meaning were, that he cannot believe without unbelief; or that he cannot think right without thinking wrong, as long as he has the fleſh luſting againſt the ſpirit within him. In this ſenſe ſome would grant it is a truth: but this is the reverſe of Mr. Robe's meaning; for he will have the imaginary idea of Chriſt wrapt in with faith, and with the view, not of a falſe, Chriſt, but of the true Chriſt, though yet he owns the idea reſpects only Chriſt as man.

That imaginary idea that cannot think of him juſtly, but only of the *fleſh that profiteth nothing*, muſt be a very ill neighbour, yea a neck-break to faith; which will have nothing to do with a half Chriſt, but conceives of, receives and matches with the whole perſon of our Immanuel. We read of the myſtery of faith, but to conceive of Chriſt as man is indeed no myſtery at all: yea, to conceive of him as man, and yet at the ſame time to conceive of him and receive him as God-man, are flat contradictions; and, till faith get itſelf ſhaken looſe of that unprofitable mate, *the imaginary idea of him as man*, it will never be-*lieve to any profit or advantage*, nor believe either to the ſaving of the

ſoul, Heb x. 39. or *to the giving glory to God*, Rev. iv. 20. What can be thought then of this doctrine of imaginary ideas? I fear it belongs to that ſort of philoſophy which the Spirit of God warns us againſt, Col. ii. 8. *Beware leſt any man ſpoil you through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Chriſt.* God ſays, *How long ſhall vain thoughts lodge within you?* And ſuch is the abſtract notion and vain imagination of Chriſt's humanity, or of Chriſt as man. It is true, the two natures of Chriſt are diſtinct, and ſo may be ſuppoſed to be the object of diſtinct ideas: but neither the one nor the other, ſeparately, are the object of ſaving faith, but only the perſon of God-man. If we cannot have an imaginary idea of him as God-man, nor can conceive of, or receive him as ſuch, but only by faith; then how can the imaginary idea of him as man belong to faith, while it cannot but ſeparate the man from the God? And ſo, the object of that idea being man, and not God, according to Mr. Robe's conceſſion, p. 12. one cannot but, the moment he hath that idea, think upon a falſe Chriſt, according to Mr. Fiſher's aſſertion; becauſe he thinks only upon a man: and indeed his imaginary ideas can lead him no higher. Therefore, when theſe are brought into the nature of faith, as a *ſine qua non*, ſo as faith cannot be acted without them, it muſt land either in a falſe faith, or a falſe Chriſt, or both: from which may the Lord in mercy deliver us; for our ſenſes and imaginations will give us little help.

And this leads me to notice another word Mr. Robe has to Mr. Fiſher, in that ſame twelfth page: "Your aſſertion, that our ſenſes and imagination cannot aſſiſt us at all in thinking upon the divine nature and perfections, is in flat contradiction to what the apoſtle ſaith, Rom. i. 20. *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal Godhead* —Our ſenſes (ſays he) and imagination are greatly helpful to bring us to the knowledge of the divine nature and perfections." I cannot but wonder at this ſtrange divinity. No doubt, *the heavens declare the glory of God*, and ſhew that a powerful God was a maker of them; and the apoſtle there ſays the ſame upon the matter, that the viſible frame declares it hath an inviſible framer; and ſo the light of nature, and works of creation, teach the *quod ſit*, or that God is, and that he muſt be clothed with ſuch perfections of wiſdom and power as theſe works declare; but, if Mr. Robe think, that theſe viſible things that ſtrike our ſenſes can lead us to the *quid ſit*, or what God is, and let us into the knowledge or right notion of the inviſible divine nature and perfections, then there would be little need of any other bible than the viſible heavens. To ſay, that our ſenſes and imaginations are greatly helpful thus to the knowledge of the divine nature and perfections, or to think upon the inviſible things of God, that are the objects of faith, and not of ſenſe, is, I ſuppoſe, in flat contradiction to what the ſame apoſtle ſays, 1 Cor ii. 11, 12, 13. *The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now, we have received, not the ſpirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given us of God. Which things alſo we ſpeak, not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth; comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual;* not natural and ſenſible things with ſpiritual, by a faith of God's operation. Hence, it is the great *end* of Chriſt's promiſing to ſend the Spirit, *to glorify him, by ſhewing the things of God that are his*, John xvi. 14, 15. We know nothing that *is ſpiritual, in* a ſpiritual way, without the teaching of the Spirit;

therefore Chriſt promiſes, *he* (the Spirit) *ſhall teach you all things*, John xiv. 26. and hence he is called the *Anointing, that teaches us all things*, and *makes us know all things*, 1 John ii. 20, 27. If there be any thing beſides theſe *all things* neceſſary, that he only teacheth, I know not what elſe they can be but unprofitable nothings, and imaginary ideas, indeed. Without this ſpiritual and divine teaching, to make us know the things and perfections of God, our ſenſes and imaginations are ſo far from being helpful to the knowledge of the divine nature and perfections, that they are only helpful for furthering men's ignorance of God, and for making them abuſe all the knowledge they have of God's being and attributes that way, unto more and more idolatry, imagery, and groſs darkneſs.

The deſign and ſcope of the apoſtle, in that verſe cited by Mr. Robe, is not ſo much to ſhow what knowledge of God's nature and perfections men may attain by the viſible works of creation, as rather, what knowledge of him, attainable this way, they ſmother and impriſon, by *holding the truth in unrighteouſneſs*, verſe 18. and how all the knowledge of God they had by the creature, made them err concerning the Creator, unto vain imaginations about him, verſe 21 and how this light and knowledge, which rendered them inexcuſable for not making a better uſe of it, did, through the corruption of their nature, make them ſtill more culpable; their knowledge, being fuel to their pride and vain glory, inſtead of being greatly helpful, was greatly hurtful to them, and declarative of their ignorance and folly, verſe 22. *Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beaſts, and to creeping things*, verſe 23. Hence the more knowledge, wiſdom, and learning, that any of the heathens had, the farther were they from the true knowledge of God, and the more ſuperſtitious and idolatrous; as appeared in the Athenians, Acts xvii. 16. who were *wholly given to idolatry*, or *full of idols*, as in the margin: their knowledge and learning made them greater enemies to a *crucified Chriſt*, who was *to the Jews a ſtumbling block, and to the Greeks* (eſpecially their moſt learned philoſophers, nothing but) *fooliſhneſs*, 1 Cor. i. 23. Here was all the knowledge of God their ſenſes and imagination in the contemplation of the creature helped them unto; and ſuch is all the help and aſſiſtance our ſenſes and imagination can give us in thinking upon the divine nature and perfections, notwithſtanding of all that may be known, or is knowable of God by the light of nature, and by the conſideration of the creatures, Rom. i. 19, 20. This abuſe of nature's light is ſo natural to all the lapſed race of mankind, that it is charged upon all the heathen world, *They became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened, and they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image*, &c Corrupt nature abuſed all the notions they had of God from the viſible creation, to more and more vile and abominable thoughts of God: and no wonder, ſince it may be ſaid of them, as it was of the whole world of old before the flood, *that every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually*, Gen. vi. 5. In the margin it is the *whole imagination*. And, if the whole and every imagination be thus corrupt, how greatly helpful our imagination can be to the knowledge of God, may eaſily be gueſſed. But was this the caſe of the heathen nations only? No, no; the ſcope of the apoſtle, in theſe *firſt three chapters of that epiſtle to the Romans*, is to prove both *Jews and Heathens to be* alike ſinful and corrupt, Rom. iii. 9. What *then? are we better than they? No, in no wiſe*: for we have before pro-

ve'l both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. And the de of God therein is, verse 19. *That every mouth may be stopped, and al world m.y become guilty before God* And why this? but that, sinc *have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*, verse 23. and so are posed *to the wrath of God revealed from heaven* in the law, sinners flee to *the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel*, chap i. 17, 18 apprehending themselves *by nature children of wrath*, may apprehend *justifying freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Ch whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood declare his righteousness for the redemption of sins, that he might be and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus.* This is the knowledg God and his perfections which the Spirit of God by the gospel lead to, and from which our senses and imagination do greatly alienate instead of being greatly helpful to us.

Thus far I have indeed incroached upon what is the proper prov of another and a fitter hand; which I was led to by Mr Robe's cl Mr. Shepherd and me upon the subject of imaginary ideas, or the ges of spiritual things, Christ, heaven or hell, represented to the sa

May this generation be delivered from an imaginary faith, reli and conversion; which will neither unite them to the true Christ, being them to the true heaven, nor keep them out of the true hell. may the Lord deliver all his people from the influence of gross sion, instead of gospel-doctrine; from carnal trash, instead of spir truth; and from the truth as it is in men's fancy and imagination Read of the truth *as it is in Jesus*, and in his blessed word, the only to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God.

FAITH NO FANCY;

OR,

A TREATISE OF MENTAL IMAGES.

BEING obliged to write in defence of the truth I have delivered in the above Appendix, againſt the violent and virulent attacks made upon it in the pamphlet, intitled Mr. Robe's fourth letter to Mr. Fiſher; that my readers may have the ſubject matter of the following treatiſe more diſtinctly before them, it ſeems neceſſary that I handle it in different parts or chapters. That I may reduce to ſome method the remarks I offer upon that pamphlet,

I. I would conſider in general, what I take to be the ſum and ſubſtance of Mr. Robe's groſs divinity and philoſophy, as he lays it, pages 30 and 34 of his letter.

II. I would ſpeak of the glorious perſon of Chriſt our Immanuel, God-man, and the myſterious conſtitution thereof; ſhewing, how his humanity therein exiſting can be the object of faith only, and not of fancy, or any imaginary idea.

III. I would ſhew the error, ignorance, atheiſm and idolatry, imported in an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man; and hence,

IV. The abſurdity of that principle, That an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is helpful to the faith of his being God-man; and that no imaginary idea of any corporeal object can give any help, either to the divine or human faith of any truth or propoſition relating to that object.

V. Offer particular remarks upon all the parts of Mr. Robe's letter relating to this ſubject, and in ſo far as he impugns the doctrine delivered in the above Appendix, and charges it with hereſy and blaſphemy.

VI. Shew in what reſpects the human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, ſo as it cannot be the object of any imaginary idea.

VII. Adduce the ſentiments of eminent divines on the ſubject; though I have ſeen none directly treating it.

VIII. Offer ſome remarks upon certain virulent paſſages of Mr. Robe's pamphlet relating to Deiſm, which he ſeems unable to purge himſelf from; and ſ hiſm, which he charges the *Aſſociate Preſbytery* with, &c.

CHAP. I.

WHEN falſe worſhip had prevailed in the church of old unto its ruin, God ſhewed and repreſented it unto his prophets under the name and appearance of a *chamber of imagery*, Ezek. viii. 12. For therein were pourtrayed all the abominations wherewith the worſhip of God was defiled, and religion corrupted. Moſt of my work at preſent is, to take a view of ſome chambers of imagery yet more ſecret and hidden, namely, retired mental ones; in which we may ſee many abominations wherewith both the ſpiritual doctrine of faith, and the divine worſhip of the goſpel is corrupted, and the chriſtian religion in danger of being ruined. From this ſecret chamber of mental or internal imagery hath come forth all the external groſs imagery that ever was in the world, and eſpecially in the chriſtian church; by which means the church of Rome became antichriſtian*. Theſe imaginary ideas, which are but vain imaginations, and about corporeal objects, brought in now by Mr. Robe, as belonging to the act or object of faith, are, in my opinion, like a new opening of the bottomleſs pit, out of the ſmoke whereof came locuſts upon the earth, Rev. ix. 2, 3; becauſe, in ſo far as theſe ideas are brought out of their own natural place, and ſuppoſed to be helpful in the ſupernatural ſubjects of divinity, they are no better than a ſmoke out of the pit, darkenig the ſun and the air, corrupting the doctrine, obſcuring the light of the truth of God, and (whatever be Mr. Robe's deſign) tending, in themſelves, to cover the face of the earth with the darkneſs of groſs error and deluſion, and to lay a new foundation for the ſpreading of idolatry and ſuperſtition, by filling the minds of people with natural, carnal notions of Chriſt as man, and of his doing and dying, as human actions and ſufferings; as if theſe notions were helpful to apprehend Chriſt, the God-man in his mediatorial works exhibited in the goſpel; while yet the glory of the goſpel is ſpiritual and inviſible, not obvious to the ſenſes and imaginations of men. There is nothing in the goſpel viſible but unto faith; as the light of the ſun is nothing to them who have no eyes. A dog and a ſtaff are of more uſe to a blind man than the ſun in the firmament. Such as are ſpiritually blind, and want the eyes of faith, or have loſt the uſe and exerciſe thereof, can ſee nothing in the goſpel, *however great* and glorious things are ſpoken of it. The

* *See Morning Exercises*, vol. 5. ſermon 10. intitled, The chambers of *imagery in the* church of Rome laid open.

light ſhines in darkneſs, and their darkneſs comprehends it not. The image of Chriſt as God in our nature, repreſented to us in the light of the goſpel, which is the only glaſs wherein we can behold his glory, 2 Cor. iii. 18. is of ſuch a nature, that no image of his human body formed in the brain, can ſtand before it, any more than Dagon could ſtand before the ark of God. As Chriſt is preſent in the goſpel, and preſent, like himſelf, in his perſonal, mediatorial, and matchleſs glory, ſo he is preſent there only to our faith and ſpiritual underſtanding; while the word is nigh unto us, even the word of faith, Rom. x. 6, 7, 8. inſomuch that none need ſay he is abſent, and *who ſhall aſcend into heaven to bring him down from thence, or deſcend into the deep to bring him up from the dead?* Chriſt, by his human body, was once here preſent to natural ſenſe; by his divine Spirit he is ſometimes preſent to ſpiritual ſenſe and experience. But he is no way preſent to our faith but in the goſpel, which, however it be a view through a glaſs darkly, yet in ſuch a way and manner, that it is the beſt view of him that can be had, till we *ſee him face to face*, 1 Cor. xiii 12. But Mr. Robe has told us of another way of Chriſt's being preſent, namely, to fancy and imagination, as to his human nature now in heaven; and that in the ſame way and manner we think of any other abſent man; and that this is abſolutely neceſſary and greatly helpful to faith. This is the ſtrange, and fantaſtical doctrine publiſhed in Mr Robe's fourth letter to Mr. Fiſher; and we have what I may call the ſum and ſubſtance of it in the following paragragh of that letter, page 30, and 31. "*Third poſition*, I aſſerted, "and do aſſert, That we cannot think upon Jeſus Chriſt "really as he is, God and man, in two diſtinct natures, and "one perſon for ever, without an imaginary idea of him as "man, or in his human nature, conſiſting of a true body "and a reaſonable ſoul. The grounds and reaſons of this "are, that, as we would not have a juſt conception of the "glorious Mediator, if we have not a conception and idea "of him as the very true and eternal God, as well as true "and real man; ſo we cannot have a juſt conception of him "if we have not a conception and idea of him as true and "real man, as well as the true and eternal God; foraſmuch "as the Mediator is as really man as he is God. And, as "we ought to form no imaginary idea of him as he is God, "but a pure conception, without any form of repreſentation "of him as God *in our minds*, ſo we can no more conceive, "*and have an idea of him* in our underſtandings as man, "*but what is called an* imaginary idea, or an idea of him

" in our minds, by the exercise of our imaginations, than " we can of Enoch or Elias, or any other man, who is now " in heaven: for this reason, that our Lord's human nature, " and particularly his glorified and superexalted body, hath " all the essential properties of any other body, and no other. " And therefore, if we can never think of any other human " nature, or human body, through our natural constitution, " and the nature of bodies, but by an imaginary idea, when " absent from us, as indeed we cannot, we can never think " upon the Mediator as man, and his body now in heaven, " by any other idea. So then, when we think upon the " Lord Jesus Christ, as he is God and man in two distinct na- " tures, and one person for ever, I must conceive of him to " be true and real man: And this is what is called an im- " aginary idea of him. I must further, by a mere act of my " understanding, conceive of him, as not only man, but the " very true and eternal God. And, thirdly, I must conceive " the manhood personally united with the Godhead in the " second person. If any of these three be wanting, I have " not such an idea of the Mediator God-man as should be. " Sir, (meaning Mr. Fisher,) you'll please tell the honest " well meaning people, in your next warning, that the plain " Scots of what I asserted here was, that we cannot think " upon Jesus Christ, as he really is, God-man, without think- " ing of him as man as really as God; and that by the ex- " ercise of the same faculties and powers I think and con- " ceive of other men."

Here is a swatch of Mr Robe's strange divinity and philosophy. But, before I offer remarks upon this paragraph, it will be necessary to premise a few things for explaining some terms. Since we have so much occasion to speak of an imaginary idea of Christ as man, two things here may be previously enquired into. 1. What is to be understood by an imaginary idea? 2. What is to be understood by Christ as man?

SECT. I.

First, In order to understand what is meant by an imaginary idea. By an idea is ordinarily understood the imaginary representation of any thing conceived in the mind. Philosophers define an idea thus, " The form or representa- " tion of any sensible object, transmitted into the brain thro' " the organs of sight or the eye." But, in a more general *sense*, it is taken for " the immediate object of understand- " *ing, whatever* it be." Hence, with logicians, idea is

"not only to be underſtood of thoſe images that are paint-
"ed by the fancy, but all that is within our underſtanding,
"when we can ſay, we conceive a thing, after what manner
"ſoever we conceive it."

Ideas are ſaid to be either ſimple or complex, as logicians ſpeak. Simple ideas are thoſe that come into mind by ſenſation; as, colours by the eye, ſounds by the ear, &c. Complex or compound ideas are founded by the power which the mind hath of comparing, ſeparating, or extracting its ſimple ideas, which come into it by ſenſation and reflection. It is obſerved by philoſophers, how eaſily the mind can vary, by imagination, theſe ideas received by outward ſenſe; that they may repreſent objects which we never perceived by any ſenſe, yea, that perhaps never exiſted. And this is done divers ways. As, (1.) By compoſition; when the mind joins two ideas of things which it perceives, and ſeparates; as when out of the idea of a mountain, and the idea of gold, we form the idea of a golden mountain. (2.) By ampliation: whereby a thing, whoſe idea is drawn from the ſenſes, is, by the imagination, repreſented to be greater than it is; as, when out of the idea of a man of common ſtature, we form the idea of a giant (3.) By diminution; as when out of the idea of a man of common ſtature, we form the idea of a pigmy or dwarf. (4.) By accommodation; whereby we bring in the idea of things which we ſee, for forming the idea of an object we never ſaw; as the idea of ſome new artifice, which none have ever ſeen, formed in the mind of the ſkilful artificer.

Again, ideas are ranked by philoſophers into two ſorts: one is corporeal or ſenſitive ideas; the other is ſpiritual or intellectual. The former reſpects bodily things, by which a man forms or acquires ideas or ſenſations of what relates to bodies: The latter are theſe by which the ſoul forms or acquires ideas of itſelf, of its own actions, or ideas of other minds or ſpirits, and ſpiritual things, by reflection. Senſitive ideas are alſo deſigned imaginative, though, when the object is preſent to the ſenſe, it is properly ſenſitive; when a man imagines his mind does not conceive the object itſelf as preſent, but only ſees the preſent image of it pictured in his brain. Imaginations are active or paſſive: The imagination is paſſive in perceiving or receiving, but moſtly active in forming ideas. And, in forming imaginative ideas, in all the four different modes above mentioned, it is manifeſt *that the mind is active.* But, when this activity of it *is applied to any object* that is ſuppoſed to be the object of

faith, as if it contributed any help to the saving knowledge of that object, then indeed it may be justly designed, in Mr. Robe's words, an imaginary idea; and does not amount even to what the learned De Vries calls but *idealis sapientia*, ideal wisdom: and which is reckoned by philosophers themselves notional and nominal, instead of what is real and solid. Their definition of the word imaginary is, "a thing not real, but fantastic, that appears only in fashion or form, and hath no real being but in one's fancy."

I have, in the following discourse, made use of the foresaid common distinction of ideas into sensitive and intellectual; though I know that some who treat of the procedure, extent, and limits of human understanding, are for exploding that distinction, allowing none but these of sensation properly. But my opponent giving occasion for this distinction, and I having no occasion to dispute this point, have not chosen to supersede the use of it.

That much plain and obvious knowledge is lost in a confused jumble and rout of ideas, and by the means of our tedious modern systems upon that subject. We are told by others also, that Tertullian also observed of old, how, in the Platonic ideas, rashly and unduly mixed with Christian faith, the seeds of heresy and error clearly appeared. Hence it was a saying of his, which hath been quoted by Jerome and others of the fathers, *hereticorum patriarchæ philosophi*, that philosophy paved the way to heresy; which it hath done in several respects. And the apostle Paul seems apprehensive it would do so, Col. ii. 8. Those that were bred in the schools of the philosophers, did oft adapt their notions in divinity to these which they had learned there. Thus Hermogenes, in the second century, maintained what Aristotle, and some other heathen philosophers that followed him, taught about the eternity of the world. So, in our days, many orthodox divines have seen ground to notice, how much the ideal doctrine of Cartesius and his followers hath tended to corrupt the doctrine of the gospel, and propagate abundance of erroneous principles. But, if the mixture of the purest ideas that philosophy speaks of, have had a ruining influence upon religion, much more, may we suppose, will the gross and new doctrine of imaginary ideas; which is no part of religious, nor so much as of rational knowledge, whatever thereof may be supposed to lay therein. The apostle, 1 Thess. iv. 23. distinguishes between *spirit and soul and body*. Upon which one observes, "That spirit "*is that part of* our frame which is immaterial, and, con-

"fequently, hath immortality in its natural frame and eſ-
"ſence; wherein conſiſts the dignity of our nature, and
"whereby we bear the image of him from whom it was ori-
"ginally breathed into men: That the inferior ſoul is that
"part of us which is mortal; that the heathen philoſophers
"called it the beaſt in us, becauſe the animal and ſenſitive
"ſoul is ſuppoſed common to us with the brutes." Hence,
ſays another, "Man is an amphibious creature, of a middle
"order and nature between angels and brutes: With the
"brutes he partakes of a corporeal ſoul, and a maſs of ani-
"mal ſpirits; with the angels he partakes of an intelligent,
"immortal, immaterial ſpirit*." "Man," ſays the afore-
ſaid anonymous author, "with reſpect to the ſimple per-
"ception of mere ſenſe, is ſtill upon the ſame level with
"brutes; he is altogether paſſive; he retains all the im-

* Man is but for a little while lower than the angels, while his great ſoul is cooped up in the houſe of clay. By his body, he is allied to the earth, and to the beaſts that periſh; and yet, by his ſoul, which is ſpiritual and immortal, he is ſo near akin to the holy angels, that he may be truly ſaid to be but a little lower than they. Henry on Pſalm viii. Rich. Baxter on 1 Theſſ v. 23. ſays, "The Apoſtle does not make "ſpirit, ſoul and body, three ſubſtantial compound parts of man —But "in theſe things even Chriſtian philoſophers differ. 1. Some think, man "hath three diſtinct ſouls, intellectual, ſenſitive; and vegetative 2. "Some, that he hath two, intellectual and ſenſitive; and that the ve-"getative is a part of the body. 3 Some, that he hath but one, with "theſe three faculties. 4. Some, that hath but one, with theſe two "faculties, intellectual and ſenſitive. 5. Some, that he hath but one, "with the faculty of intellection and will; and that the ſenſitive is "corporeal. (So little do we know ourſelves).—What I think moſt "probable I have opened *in methodo theologiæ*; That man hath but "one ſubſtantial ſoul, with both intellectual and ſenſitive faculties; "and that it is uncertain whether the vegetative be its faculty, or on-"ly the faculty of the igneous or ethereal ſubſtance which is the im-"mediate vehicle of the ſoul. It is enough for us to know as much of "our ſouls as our duty in uſing them, and our felicity, doth require; "as he may know his clock, watch, houſe, horſe, who knows not how "to make them, nor can anatomize them. Maſtricht prodromi theol. p. 51. Quas in tribus viventium ſpeciebus diſperſas vides tres animas, vegetativum, ſenſitivum & rationalem, eas unitas habes in homine; non tanquam totidem animas, ſed tanquam tot ejuſdem animæ partes ſeu gradus. (Et ſupra) De partibus eſſentialibus, ſeu mavis facultatibus, ſive enim partes dicas, ſive facultates; & ſi partes, ſive actuales, ſive potentiales, parum refert; modo animum nobis relinquas immaterialem. Macovii diſtinct. & regulæ, p. 67. Hominis tantum duæ ſunt partes eſſentiales, corpus, ſcilicit, et anima —Obj. ex 1 Theſſ. v. 23. Ubi tres nominantur, corpus, anima, & ſpiritus. Reſp. Dum anima & ſpiritus corpori contradiſtinguuntur, non intelliguntur duo diverſa, ſed una eademque res, per diverſas facultates expreſſa: nam per animam, intelligitur *anima ſenſitiva*, per ſpiritum facultas rationalis, ut hoc prolixe probatur a *Theod. Beza in* annotat. maj N.T.

" preſſions of outward objects, but in the order in which " they were ſtamped, without altering, dividing, com- " pounding, or comparing them with one another. And " they would always continue ſo in the imagination, if " there were not a principle above matter, firſt to contem- " plate and view them, and then to work up theſe rude and " groſs materials into a great number of curious arts and " ſciences. The ſimple perception of brutes, ſays he, is, " properly ſpeaking. the perception of the object by the " idea, and not the perception of the idea itſelf, or any " view or contemplation of it, in diſtinction from the ob- " ject; which ſimple perception of ſenſe they have from " their wiſe Creator, ofttimes to a greater perfection than " men; becauſe the ideas of ſenſe in the imagination of " brutes are the whole ſum and ſubſtance of their know- " ledge, to ſpeak by way of analogy, which in men are " but materials for it, &c.; and becauſe they are the ſole " principles of their actions, inſomuch as they are wholly " and paſſively conducted in all their purſuits, by the force " and impulſe of theſe ideas of ſenſation alone, (which is " natural inſtinct), and not by any ſeparate view or contem- " plation of them. All ideas, ſays the ſame author, beyond " thoſe that are ſimple, (which come into the imagination " without the concurrence of the intellect), are the creatures " of the intellect or underſtanding in men; which hath an " arbitrary power over theſe ideas, to alter, enlarge, di- " miniſh, and to turn and wind them at pleaſure; and thus " raiſes up to itſelf a new ſet of compound ideas, with which " the imagination is furniſhed, &c. Thus the ideas of many " men may be put together into the idea of an army, many " ſheep to make up the idea of a flock, many houſes the " idea of a city. Thus alſo the idea of one man is by the " intellect made to ſtand for all mankind, which is called an " univerſal idea, &c. The ſame author thinks it blameable " in philoſophers to confound the ideas of ſenſation with the " operations of the mind upon them, making the ſame thing " to be an idea and the operation of the mind upon an idea " at the ſame time. And this new ſet of ideas is expreſſed " by what he calls the abſurb term of an idea of reflection; " whereas if they had diſtinguiſhed them in plain language, " into ideas of ſenſe, and ideas of reaſon, it would be bet- " ter underſtood; becauſe every body could then ſee, that " reaſon is the operating of our mind upon our ideas, &c. " *There is an eſſential* difference between a ſimple percep- " *tion of the ſenſe,* and a ſimple apprehenſion of the mind:

"The conſequence of the former is an idea of the imagina-
"tion. This perception of ſenſe is common to us with
"brutes, that are moved by the internal impulſe of theſe
"ideas which they have got from the impreſſion of the out-
"ward object; whereas the latter, ſays he, that is, the ſim-
"ple apprehenſion of the intellect, is an act and operation
"of the mind, not of the ſenſe; and is the perfection and
"excellency of the human ſoul; whereby the pure intellect
"only takes, among its firſt operations, a ſimple view or
"ſurvey of theſe ideas of ſenſation, in the very order and
"condition whereby they lay in the imagination. This is
"what logicians call ſimple apprehenſion, but generally
"confound with pure ſenſation

"The imagination is ſtored with an immenſe number of
"ideas of all objects which occur to the ſenſes. What an
"amazing variety of them is daily conveyed in by that one
"ſenſe of ſeeing? To which if ye add theſe of the other
"ſenſes, we ſhall render the number inexhauſtible. And
"yet nothing of all theſe is properly knowledge, conſidered
"in themſelves, and abſtractly from that intuition or view
"taken of them by the pure intellect: They are only the
"rude and unwrought materials heaped together for that
"ſuperſtructure which every man is to raiſe, according to
"the peculiar diſpoſition of his natural genius, &c."

This account I have here given of ideas may be of uſe in the following diſcourſe: Wherein I have occaſion to notice how much my opponent confounds ſenſe and imagination with knowledge and underſtanding, and how much the objects *of* theſe are, by his doctrine, blended with the objects of faith.

Senſe, imagination, and underſtanding, have been diſtinguiſhed in philoſophy by the following example. When we behold the ſun with open eyes, then external ſenſe is manifeſt; when we ſhut our eyes, and think upon the ſun, then internal ſenſe, or imagination is manifeſt; but, when we conſider the apparent diſtance, and compare the apparent magnitude of the ſun, with what muſt be the real diſtance, and real bulk of it, then underſtanding is manifeſted, by deducing conſequences from manifeſt principles. The firſt two of theſe belong to the ſenſitive part of man, the laſt to the rational. Imaginary ideas relate to the former, and theſe have no other object, as Mr Robe frequently and ſolemnly aſſerts, but things corporeal. Intellectual ideas relate *to the rational part.* Senſe, reaſon and faith are *powers and faculties that act* in their own proper ſpheres,

as different in themſelves as the firſt, ſecond, and third heaven. Senſe, whether external or internal, as above mentioned, hath for its objects things corporeal; reaſon, properly, things intellectual; and faith, things ſpiritual and ſupernatural, revealed in God's word. Senſe cannot aſpire to the ſphere of reaſon, nor reaſon to the ſphere of faith; and far leſs can ſenſe and imaginary ideas do ſo.

Thus far I have given my reader ſome hints of philoſophy anent ideas. But, as to imaginary ones, though I am obliged ſo frequently, in the progreſs, to ſpeak theſe words over and over, I ſcarce know if I have yet touched the proper meaning of the term imaginary idea. It is ſuch an odd and unuſual phraſe, eſpecially when applied to any ſubject of divinity, that even the grammatical explication of it ſeems to have a ſtrange appearance: for, if according to the ſchools, an idea is the image of a thing in the mind, then an imaginary idea muſt ſignify an imaginary image in the mind; which is much the ſame as if one ſhould ſpeak of a fantaſtical fancy, or a notional notion. And yet this is what the author I have to do with ſeems to be contending for, as abſolutely neceſſary and greatly helpful to faith, while he makes the imaginary idea of Chriſt, as man, ſuch a leading and eſſential ingredient therein. But I ſhall take this term in the moſt favorable ſenſe I can; that is, for the property of an idea, by which an imaginative is contradiſtinguiſhed from an intellectual one: If ſuch a diſtinction can be allowed, notwithſtanding what is ſaid above by ſome, that there are no ideas, properly ſo called, but theſe of ſenſation only; becauſe we have no images of ſpiritual objects, or direct and immediate repreſentations thereof, as we have of objects that are material or corporeal. But, as the diſtinction between imaginative and intellectual ideas is very common in philoſophy; ſo, when I make uſe of it in the following work I intend mainly to diſtinguiſh the man from the beaſt, or acts that are rational, from theſe that are merely ſenſitive.

SECT. II.

I come, ſecondly, to explain what is to be underſtood by *Chriſt as man*; of which Mr. Robe aſſerts, we muſt neceſſarily have an imaginary idea, in order to believing. I know not if ever any divine expreſſed himſelf in ſuch terms as theſe, namely, an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man; which, if they are agreeable either to philoſophy or divinity, *reaſon, or religion*, is what I am to enquire into.

I premiſe, that to think of a corporeal object by an im-

aginary idea in a natural way, is a natural action of the mind or ſoul as animal and ſenſitive. And this can be no otherwiſe ſinful in itſelf than other natural actions. Thus, tho' it was lawful and innocent for the natural bodily eyes of the multitude to look upon Chriſt's human body, when he was on earth, and to touch it, when preſſed upon him in the throng; or yet, when out of his ſight, to fancy or imagine what a man he was whom they ſaw; yet, to incorporate or mix theſe natural actions with ſpiritual and religious ones, or with the actings of faith, would have been highly abſurd: For, to make that which is the object of ſenſe preſent, or the object of fancy abſent, to be the object of faith and worſhip is not only contradictory to the nature of divine faith and worſhip, but equally idolatrous with making any other man, or any other corporeal object of ſenſe or fancy, to be ſo For there is no difference between Chriſt conſidered only as a human creature, or a corporeal object (as Mr. Robe ſpeaks) and any other human creature, or corporeal object, as ſuch, which may be ſeen or viewed by the eye or fancy in a natural way without ſin. But to be viewed or thought of in a religious way, ſo as to make that any part of the object of faith or religious worſhip, is as monſtrous idolatry as ever was among heathens; and contrary to the very dictates of natural reaſon and natural religion among wiſe heathens; who have ſaid (with a *ſi, id eſt, quum*, ſeeing) *Si Deus eſt animus, ſit pura mente colendus.* The object of faith and worſhip is ſome other thing, than what can fall within the compaſs of any man's natural ſenſe or fancy, *Heb.* xi. 1. 27. John iv. 24. It is not fleſh, or our human nature in God that we believe in, nor worſhip; but God himſelf made manifeſt in the fleſh, or God in our nature; otherwiſe we worſhip an idol and image of our own brain. Hence, when ſound divines ſpeak of Chriſt as man, or as a man, they never underſtand it in Mr. Robe's ſenſe, namely, of his human body, as it is the object of an imaginary idea, and ſo diſtinct from the divine nature and perſon of Chriſt. But by Chriſt as man, or as a man, they underſtand the perſon of Chriſt, denominate from his manhood. Which is a moſt uſual figure, called a ſynecdoche, or the part for the whole; and a part ſometimes, in point of expreſſion and denomination only, and not in point of conception or imagination; for many times this figure of a part denominating the whole, includes nothing but the conception of the thing or perſon denominate by that part. For example, we find ſometimes a *perſon denominate from* a quality, which cannot be con-

ceived without the ſubject, or perſon in which that quality ſubſiſts; ſuppoſe it to be a black Indian, or a white European, we call the one a black, and the other a white: In which denomination, though it be only from the different colours, yet it is not colours but perſons that are meant or conceived of; becauſe theſe qualities white and black cannot be conceived in the abſtract, without ſome thing or perſon thus denominated by that quality. Sometimes, by this figure, the denomination is given to the perſon from ſome part; and yet the idea of that part is not included in the conception of what is thus demonſtrate, but only the perſon denominate by it. For example, in that queſtion, Iſa. i. 12. *Who hath required this at your hand?* here perſons are meant, though denominate from the hand; becauſe that is the inſtrument of operation or working: But the imaginary idea of a hand would here be very abſurd. Sometimes perſons are denominate from the foot, as in that expreſſion, *Keep thy foot when thou goeſt into the houſe of God;* Eccleſ v. 1. Here perſons walking are denominated from that member of the body by which they walk: And ſo here, to be ſure, the imaginary idea of a foot would be quite out of purpoſe. Thus, men are ſometimes denominate from the knee, as Iſa. xlv. 23. *To me every knee ſhall bow;* that is, every perſon ſhall worſhip; the knee being the outward inſtrument of homage: This denomination includes no neceſſity at all of an imaginary idea of every bodily knee, but merely the conception of perſons that, either by conſent or conſtraint, ſhall be obliged to pay homage to Chriſt. There would be no end of inſtances of this ſort. But, in thoſe that I have given, ſurely an imaginary idea of hands, and feet, and knees, would import no part of rational knowledge or reflection, but an idea without underſtanding; for ſo Mr. Robe afterwards acknowledges, 'where it ends, underſtanding proceeds.' Such an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, being in itſelf without underſtanding, is what I contend againſt, as not belonging to judgment or reaſon, far leſs to faith or religion.

But all ſound divines, as I ſaid, when they ſpeak of Chriſt as man, they always underſtand the perſon of Chriſt denominate from his manhood*. Or, if they ſpeak of his human nature as contradiſtinct from his divine, they ſpeak of it in ſuch a way as is agreeable with its being the object of ra-

* Maccovii diſtinctiones et regulæ theol. & philoſ. p. 108. Perſona (Chriſti) denominatur ab alterutra natura in concreto, ut homo Chriſtus non ſignificat humanitatem tantum, ſed totam perſonam, humanam, ſcilicit, & divinam naturam. Chriſtus Deus non ſignificat deitatem *tantum, ſed Chriſtum* Deum & hominem.

tional knowledge and true faith. But ſo it cannot be, when it is ſpoke of as the object of an imaginary idea.

Hence, it is eaſy to prove, that the ſenſe in which Mr. Robe ſpeaks of Chriſt as man, cannot be the ſenſe in which any orthodox divine ever ſpoke of it. Though he expreſſes himſelf on this head, in ſuch a way as, in my opinion, is irreconcileable with good ſenſe and reaſon; yet, that I may not be ſuppoſed to have written this treatiſe ſo idly, as to fill it with trifling criticiſms upon ungrammatical expreſſions or to ſpend time in a mere logomachy, or ſtrife and contention about the meaning of words, I ſhall here make it evident, that Mr. Robe hath explained himſelf to my hand, and laid down his ſtated principle relating to what he calls an imaginary idea and what he makes the object of it, inſomuch that, by Chriſt as man, he cannot be ſuppoſed to mean the perſon of our Mediator denominate by his manhood, in which ſenſe he is the object of faith, and that becauſe,

(1) He ſpeaks of an imaginary idea of him as man; and conſequently, he ſpeaks of his manhood in the ſenſe wherein it is the object of that imaginary idea; which, he owns, reſpects only corporeal objects. This he hath frequently aſſerted in the ſtrongeſt terms. He lays it down as a poſition of his, page 29, "That we can have no imaginary idea of ſpiritual things; ſeeing only corporeal things are the object of that faculty and power in man called imagination." To the ſame purpoſe he had ſaid, p 9. "This faculty was never deſigned of God for this purpoſe, viz of giving imaginary ideas of God, and ſpiritual things." P. 24. "That there can be no imaginary ideas of ſpiritual things; theſe are not the objects about which the imagination can be converſant, neither can it receive any ſpecies of them. This was my judgment, ſays he, anent imaginary ideas of ſpiritual things, and this it continues to be, and you ſhall never be able to prove the contrary." How theſe and the like expreſſions are reconcileable with ſome other expreſſions in his book, will appear afterwards. Only, as to the matter in hand, when Mr. Robe ſpeaks of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, it muſt be a wronging of him to ſuppoſe, that he means any other thing by the object of that idea, than the figure or image of Chriſt's human body pictured in the brain. He cannot mean what philoſophers call *eſſe perſonæ*, but *eſſe ſubſtantiæ*. He cannot be ſuppoſed to mean the perſon of Chriſt; for that is not an object of an imaginary idea, he being thus God as well as man. Yea, he cannot mean the humanity of Chriſt properly, for that includes ſoul

as well as body, and ſo muſt be the object of ſome o
than a mere imaginary idea. But he muſt mean, accor
to his own explication of that idea, nothing elſe bu
corporeal ſubſtance of Chriſt's human body; not the
but the body; not the man, nor the human nature, but
human ſubſtance, or corporeal part of that nature: For
Mr. Robe ſays himſelf again, p 55, the imaginary idea
not extend to the ſoul. Yea, by his imaginary idea he
not mean imagination accompanied with knowledge
underſtanding, the object whereof are things ſpiritual
intelligible, as ſuch, for he ſays, underſtanding proc
where the imaginary idea ends, p 54. Which ſeems to
that he owns that it is an idea without knowledge; a
deed it is in itſelf an idea without rational knowledge
I ſhall afterwards ſhew.

(2.) That Mr. Robe's imaginary idea of Chriſt as man
ſtead of importing the perſon of Chriſt denominate fro
human nature, does plainly exclude the conſideration o
perſon and Godhead, is what he further proves to my h
by making theſe the object of ſome other ideas, thoug
the ſame time. Hence, in p. 31. he makes three diſ
ideas neceſſary for thinking upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſ
he is God and man, in two diſtinct natures and one pe
"Firſt, ſays he, I muſt conceive of him to be true and
man; and this is what is called an imaginary idea of
2dly, I muſt, by a more act of my underſtanding, con
of him as not only man, but the very true and eternal
3dly, I muſt conceive the manhood perſonally united
God." Here I might quarrel, 1ſt. That there is no wo
faith, but only ideas, and acts and conceptions of the
ural underſtanding. 2dly, That the glorious object of
is thus divided, that one part of it may be the object of
idea, and another part the object of another idea; one
of it laid before the ſenſitive, another part before the i
lectual faculty of the ſoul; as if Chriſt in his perſon
divided, and part of the diviſion were conceivable by f
and imagination, and part of it by a mere act of the un
ſtanding; and as if a whole Chriſt were not the obje
faith, but a part of him the object of any man's imagi
idea. This doctrine Mr. Robe repeats and confirms, p
where he ſays, "I muſt, by one idea, think of him as
by another as God, and by a third as God and man pe
ally united." By the bye, I may here remark, that, i
cording to the philoſophical account of ideas above, we
have no proper or immediate idea of any ſpirit, far le

the infinite God, who is infinitely above our moſt elevated intellectual conception, then the abſurdities of Mr. Robe's raſh and bold ſpeeches anent his having an idea of God might be many ways expoſed. Though he ſometimes ſays in his letter, that he cannot believe what he hath no conception of; yet here at leaſt he may find himſelf obliged to believe the being of that God of whom he can have no idea. The light of nature itſelf, by which we have the natural knowledge of God, teaches us alſo, that, in knowing we do not know him; and that to have an idea or conception of him, who is inconceivable, is a contradiction. The learned De Vries and Maſtricht, and other eminent doctors and divines abroad, contend ſo ſtrenuouſly againſt the Carteſian doctrine, concerning ideas of God, as leading to imagery and *idol*atry, that, to me, it appears very dangerous to admit of ſuch ideas.

But my preſent ſcope leads me eſpecially here to conſider the firſt member of Mr. Robe's diſtinction, as above, or the firſt thing he makes requiſite to our thinking of Chriſt as we ought; namely, to have an imaginary idea of him as man. This, I ſay, he proves to be no idea of his perſon or Godhead, by ſhewing, that theſe muſt be conceived by ideas of another kind; intimating thus again, that his imaginary idea excludes all other objects but corporeal; and, conſequently, any part of the object of that idea: And hence that idea, ſo far as it goes, excludes all thoughts of Chriſt as God, or as God man, out of the ſoul, until it have the aſſiſtance of theſe ideas of another kind, to bear company *with* that imaginary one. Before I go on to the third evidence he gives of this matter, I muſt notice here how Mr. Robe hath miſtaken himſelf in his way of ſpeaking which he uſes through his book. For here he ſays, "I muſt conceive of him to be true and real man; and this is what is called an imaginary idea of him." If here he means, that to conceive of this truth, That Chriſt is true and real man, is an imaginary idea of him as man, he hath quite forgot himſelf, or elſe ſpoke what he knew what; for his imaginary idea can have no other but a corporeal object. And therefore this truth, That Chriſt is a true and real man, cannot be the object of an imaginary idea. A truth may relate, as to the ſubject matter of it, unto ſome corporeal thing; but a truth, as it is a truth, relate to what it will, is a thing intelligible, that may be the object of knowledge, faith, or credit; but cannot be the object of an imaginary idea: For it hath no corporeal form; none can frame any image of it in their brain. But of this more afterwards.

There is a vaſt odds between the truth of that propoſition That Chriſt is true man, and the imaginary idea of a true man. We believe upon the teſtimony of God, that Chriſt is true man; and thus his being a true man, is the object of our faith. But, as to the imaginary idea of his being a true man, which Mr. Robe makes the firſt thing requiſite to the right thinking of him as God and man in two diſtinct natures, here is a miſerable mixture of faith with fancy. He mixes this conceiving of Chriſt as man, by an imaginary idea, with the conceiving of him as God, and as God man, by the mere act of the underſtanding; and ſo the faith of his perſon with the fancy of his manhood, as if this fancy were eſſential to faith; which tends to make the faith of Chriſt's manhood nothing but a fancy. Whereas, the true faith of Chriſt's being man, is a thing moſt remote from that imaginary idea or fancy about Chriſt's manhood: For it receives the truth of that propoſition, That Chriſt is true man, upon the ſame divine teſtimony that it receives the truth of this, That he is true God, and God-man in one perſon. And both theſe truths are received by one and the ſame faculty, namely, ſpiritual underſtanding, or a mind enlightened in the knowledge of Chriſt by the word and Spirit of God. To ſeek after any part of the knowledge of Chriſt in our own imaginary idea of him as man, is equally fooliſh as to ſeek the morning ſtar in a dunſgeon, or the ſun in a dunghill. How vaſtly differs the faith of Chriſt's manhood in the heart, from the fancy of it in the head? By the imaginary idea of it we ſee, but do not believe and we ſee nothing but the image of a human body, as it ſtands in the brain; but by faith we know and believe his true humanity, as it is recorded in the Bible, ſaying, as 1 John v. 20. *We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding to know him that is true, &c.* Here faith and fancy differ as much, as what is real differs from what is imaginary, and as a heart perſuaſion differs from a head notion. But of theſe things more afterwards.

I proceed to a third proof and evidence Mr. Robe here gives, that, when he ſpeaks of Chriſt as man, he cannot underſtand it of the perſon denominate from his manhood, in which ſenſe it would be the object of faith; but that he means only Chriſt's human body, as it is the object of an imaginary idea, in which reſpect it can only be the object of ſenſe, not of faith. This he proves, I ſay, by the following words, in the forecited pages, 30 and 31. "We can no more conceive, and have an idea of Chriſt in our underſtandings *as man, but* what is called an imaginary idea, or an idea of *him in our minds*, by the exerciſe of our imagination, than

we can of Enoch or Elias, or of any other man who is now in heaven; for this reaſon, that our Lord's human nature, and particularly, his glorified and ſuperexalted body, hath all the eſſential properties of any other body, and no other: And therefore, if we can never think of any other human nature, or human body, through our natural conſtitution, and the nature of bodies, but by an imaginary idea, when abſent from us, which indeed we cannot, we can never think of our Mediator as man, and his body now in heaven, by any other idea, &c". Then he adds, "The plain Scots of what I aſſert is, that we cannot think upon Jeſus Chriſt, as he really is, God-man, without thinking of him as man, as really as God; and that by the exerciſe of the ſame faculties and powers I think and conceive of other men." Here, I muſt ſay, appears to me ſuch a heap of groſs, abſurd, and notional ſtuff, inſtead of ſolid divinity, that, for my part, I would not be the author of it for the whole world. The groſſneſs and abſurdity thereof may appear in the following remarks.

Firſt, Here faith and fancy are miſerably confounded; the faith of Chriſt's divine perſon, as God-man, (which neceſſarily includes the faith of his humanity) with the fancy of his human body, in the exerciſe of the ſame faculties and powers whereby we conceive of other men: And ſo he makes the human nature of Chriſt not the object of faith at all, but of fancy and imagination. Here it is to be noticed, that the faculties he ſpeaks of are corporeal, as he brings in Charnock aſſerting, p. 8. the objects theſe are converſant about, are only corporeal, as he himſelf hath declared; and, conſequently, they are ſuch as cannot conceive of Chriſt as man, having, together with a true body, a rational ſoul; which is no corporeal object, though the chief part of his human nature: And ſo his corporeal idea, according to himſelf, cannot conceive of Chriſt as man, while it conceives only of a human body, which is not the man, but the leaſt part of the human nature. It is hard to think Mr. Robe underſtood what he wrote, unleſs he can here be ſuppoſed to ſpeak by a figure called Hendiadys, that is, when one thing is expreſſed by two terms; and ſo, by the human nature of Chriſt, to mean his human body, and no more; becauſe this only, being corporeal, can be the object of an imaginary idea. But how can this be his meaning, when ſo frequently he ſpeaks of the human nature of Chriſt, as not only a true body, but alſo a reaſonable ſoul? Yet Mr Robe here ſpeaks of the *human nature*, or the human body, as if theſe two

were alternatives, and could equally be the object of an imaginary idea; and ſpeaks of the idea of Chriſt's human body, as if it were the ſame with the idea of his human nature: whereas the human nature includes the human ſoul, as well as the human body. And he elſewhere declares and maintains, that neither the human ſoul, or any ſpirit, can be the object of an imaginary idea; and yet here he ſays, Chriſt's human nature can be conceived by no other than an imaginary idea. It cannot be ſaid with any good ſenſe, either that the human nature is a ſoul, or that the human nature is a body; for human nature conſiſts of ſoul and body unite. It cannot be ſaid, man is a ſoul, or man is a body; becauſe theſe are the integral parts of a man, and the union of theſe together conſtitutes the man or the human nature. And therefore, to conceive of him thus united, requires ſome other than an imaginary idea; which can have no other than the corporeal part to be the object of it. The ſoul being ſpiritual, cannot be the object of that imaginative faculty. I know not how many times I have this abſurdity to notice in Mr. Robe's pamphlet; as will appear afterwards.

Second remark. He here debaſes the human nature of Chriſt, as an object no otherwiſe diſcernible, than the ſame way that we diſcern any other man in heaven or in the earth. Thus, it is only Mr. Robe, not Mr. Erſkine, that makes the human nature of Chriſt not the object of faith. For, unleſs he make Enoch and Elias in heaven, or any other man on earth, the object of his faith, equally with Chriſt as man, he muſt have ſome other way of thinking on Chriſt as man, than he has of thinking on them; though I own an imaginary idea can think no otherwiſe of Chriſt as man, that it does of other men. It forms a picture of their bodies in the brain, even as it does the picture of Chriſt's body. He can think no otherwiſe of other men, than to think they are perſons: For to think of a man, and not of a human perſon, is impoſſible; for none can think of a nature without a ſubject, or a human nature without a human perſon, wherein that nature exiſts; (of which more afterwards): Even ſo, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, or in his human nature, as Mr. Robe ſpeaks, neceſſarily makes him at beſt think of a human perſon. And here is the very root and ſpring of old Neſtorianiſm, making Chriſt to have two perſons, a human and a divine, as well as two natures. Mr. Robe may profeſs this is not his principle, that Chriſt is a human perſon: If ſo, then he muſt deny his preſent doctrine, namely, that he can have an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, in the manner and way

he thinks of other men. Why, he thinks truely and rightly of other men; becauſe, as men, they are perſons: But he thinks falſely of Chriſt as man; becauſe, as man, he is no perſon. Therefore his fancy of Chriſt as man, is indeed but a fancy. One may feed himſelf with the vain and vile notion of Chriſt as man, but I can venture to ſay, as a miniſter of Chriſt, that he never ſaw Chriſt's human nature by faith, nor ever had a right thought of it, who never could think of it but as he thinks of other men.

Third remark. He here declares, that, when he thinks of Chriſt as man, it is by the exerciſe of the ſame faculties and powers by which he thinks or conceives of other men. Here is as groſs and carnal doctrine, when not cautioned nor guarded, as ever I read of; though it is agreeable enough to the doctrine of imaginary ideas in divinity. The powers and faculties of the ſoul, by which true believers ſee Chriſt to be man, are the ſame with theſe by which they ſee him to be God, and to be God-man in one perſon: And theſe are not merely natural, but the powers and faculties of a new nature, renewed by the power of divine grace, giving ſpiritual illumination and ſaving faith: For *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* It is true, as Charnock ſays, vol ii. p. 72. 73. "Regeneration is not a removal of the old ſubſtance or faculties of the ſoul;—but the ſoul is ſo much changed,—that it is, as it were, a new ſoul, a new underſtanding, a new will.—The change is ſo great, that the ſoul ſeems to be of another ſpecies and kind; becauſe it is acted by that grace which is another principle from that principle which acted it before. New creation is called a reſurrection. Our Saviour, in his reſurrection, had the ſame body, but endued with a new quality.—So, though the eſſence of the ſoul and faculties remain the ſame, yet another kind of light is darted in, and other qualities implanted.—This not a change of the eſſential acts of the ſoul, as acts;—but the principle, end, and objects of theſe acts, ariſing from theſe reſtoring qualities, are altered.—As when a man walks from eaſt to weſt, tis the ſame motion in body and joints;—yet they are contrary motions, becauſe the terms to which they tend, are contrary one to the other."——Such indeed are the different, yea, and contrary motions and objects of the ſoul's acts, when it has the natural notion and imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, and when it has the ſpiritual view of him as Immanuel God man. They differ juſt as much as the natural ſight of a man in our nature, by the eye of ſenſe or fancy

differs from the ſupernatural ſight of God in our nature, by the eye of faith, and ſpiritual underſtanding. They that never ſaw the man Chriſt in any other light, than by the ſame powers and faculties whereby they ſee or think of other men, whether preſent or abſent, are yet groſsly ignorant of Chriſt. They that by faith ſee Chriſt to be man, they by the ſame faith ſee him to be God; and they ſee God in him: *For he that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father*, ſays Chriſt. It is true, Mr. Robe ſpeaks alſo of Chriſt's being God, and God-man in one perſon, and makes theſe the objects of a more pure intellectual idea, though he makes Chriſt as man the object of an imaginary idea. But this will by no means bring him out of the miry clay and horrible pit of ignoran e and abſurdity, into which he hath fallen by this new doctrine of notional and ideal religion. For, as the intellectual powers of nature can no more bring any man to the ſaving knowledge of God, than imaginary ideas can bring him out of the miry clay and horrible pit of ignorance and abſurdity, into which he hath fallen by this new doctrine of notional and ideal religion. For, as the intellectual powers of nature can no more bring any man to the ſaving knowledge of God, than imaginary ideas can bring him to the right knowledge of Chriſt's human nature; ſo this human nature of Chriſt was never ſeen or known to any ſaving advantage, but by the ſame ſupernatural powers and ſpiritual faculties whereby we ſee him to be God, and to be God-man in one perſon: For it is not in one light we ſee Chriſt as man; and in another as God; and in a third as God-man in one perſon; but in one and the ſame light we ſee the glorious perſon of our Immanuel God man, when *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhines into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face*, or perſon *of Chriſt*. 2 Cor. iv 6. Gal i. 16. John i 14. We know not Chriſt ſavingly to be the *Son of man*, namely, by *the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt*, Eph. i. 17. And, till *God give us an underſtanding to know him that is true*, we know not *that the Son of man is come* in our nature, or that he is true man, any more than we know that *he is the true God and eternal life*, 1 John v 20. Both theſe are ſeen in one and the ſame light of the Word and Spirit of God, and by one and the ſame eye of faith and ſaving knowledge, which looks to the perſon God-man; not to his manhood, as Mr. Robe ſuppoſes, with one eye, namely, an imaginary idea, *and to his* Godhead and perſonality with another eye, namely, *an intellectual* idea. Which, from what I have ſaid,

appears to be moſt unſcriptural doctrine, or rather antiſcriptural, eſpecially when the human nature of Chriſt, that Mr. Robe makes the object of faith, is ſuch a humanity as we can as eaſily conceive of, as we can of any other man out of ſight. I am confident, they that never ſaw the human nature of Chriſt in any other light, never believed it, nor had any view of it, as the object of faith. Yea, it were as unlawful to make that imaginary Chriſt the object of their faith, as it is unlawful and idolatrous to make any other man the object of faith. God will not be mocked with our dreams and head notions; nor will he give his glory to another.

It is true, Mr. Robe, in his tripartite diviſion of ideas above mentioned, ſays, "That, if any of them be wanting, it is not ſuch an idea of the Mediator God-man as ſhould be." But, as each of theſe ideas are mere philoſophical notions, and one may have them all, and yet want the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt; ſo it is plain, that the firſt of theſe, namely, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, can at beſt, even according to Mr. Robe, go no farther than the notion of a mere man; ſuch as Enoch or Elias, whom he inſtances. And, ſeeing to make a mere man the object of faith, is groſs idolatry, therefore to make that imaginative faculty, which was never deſigned for conceiving any other but objects of ſenſe, to be one of theſe faculties whereby we are to conceive the object of faith, is groſs divinity, leading directly to the foreſaid groſs idolatry; becauſe that imaginary idea (whatever other idea it is ſuppoſed to be followed with) can ſee no farther about Chriſt than a mere man; nay, not ſo far; for it can conceive of no more but a human body, a mere corporeal object; under which conſideration it is an object of ſenſe, but not of faith; an object of carnal imagination, but not of divine worſhip, any more than the body of Enoch or Elias in heaven, objected to our imagination on earth. Yea, to worſhip Chriſt's human body, as repreſented by ſuch an imaginary idea, is the ſame thing with worſhipping a dead idol, or a molten image, inſtead of an incarnate God; who alone is the object of ſaving faith and divine worſhip.

Mr. Robe's threefold idea that he makes neceſſary for a right thought of Chriſt, and conſequently to right believing, and whereof his firſt is the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, ſeems, from what is ſaid, to want a neceſſary addition, which would make it fourfold, namely, an intellectual idea of Chriſt's human *ſoul*; *for* the imaginary idea, according to *his own acknowledgement*, reſpects only corporeal or bod-

ily things. But yet after all, none of all these four, either separately or jointly, make up a right thought of Christ, I mean a spiritual thought of him; nor do they all amount to a believing on the Son of God: For they all belong, partly to fancy, notion, speculation, and, at best, human ratiocination; or partly to some branch of natural philosophy, illuminated with objective scripture revelation; and are all of them obvious to any man that reads the Bible, and hath the right exercise of reason and of his natural faculties. But faith acts in another sphere; the subject of it being a man or woman whose mind is enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, by the word and Spirit of God, and whose natural powers are renewed and spiritualized. Hence, none ever received Christ by believing on his name, unless they were *born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God.* Then, and not till then, can they say, *The word was made flesh; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,* John i. 12, 13, 14. Hence we are taught also, that *none can come to Christ* by faith or believing, *except the Father draw them;* which the Father does by his effectual teaching: *It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto the Son.* And again, Christ says, *No man can come unto me, except it be given him of my Father,* John vi. 44, 45, 46.

I might produce a fourth evidence of this, that, when Mr. Robe speaks of Christ as man, he cannot understand it of the person of Christ, the object of faith, denominate from his manhood; because, as he makes Christ as man, only the object of an imaginary idea, so he makes that idea of Christ as man, to be a naked and simple idea, distinct from the idea of him as Mediator God-man, which he makes not a simple, but a complex idea For, p. 54 having said, "Where the imaginary idea ends, the understanding proceeds," &c. he adds, "The idea we have of the Mediator God man in two natures and one person, when it is adequate, as the subject is capable to have of the object, is not a simple, but complex idea, consisting of ideas distinct and different in their natures, as the two natures of the glorious Mediator." Hence it is evident, his imaginary idea of Christ as man, being both distinct and different in its nature from, and prior or previous to that complex idea, which includes the whole person of Christ, is, according to him, a naked simple idea of sensation, respecting what is merely sensible and corporeal; and so can in itself include no consideration of the person of

, or of the proper object of faith. Such a naked ſimple
:an ſurely judge no way of any truth or falſhood.
the foreign divines and philoſophers, as De Vries and
icht*, in their diſputes againſt the ſceptic notions of
arteſian writers (who, in favours of their innate ideas
things, made the ſenſes of little other uſe in men than
ites, deſtitute, as of reaſon, ſo of theſe ideas; and judg-
e ſenſes ſo fallacious, as no way to be truſted, no judg-
to be formed of any truth by them;) when, in anſwer
nto, they aſſert the ſenſes to be judges, and their teſti-
to be neceſſary to the knowledge and faith of truths
ng to ſenſible things, they at the ſame time aſſert that
nſes cannot properly judge or reaſon, affirm or deny
hing; and that therefore by ſenſes they do not mean
l ſenſes, but the prudent uſe of the ſenſes, reſulting
the rational ſoul; whereof brutes are deſtitute, though
have both ſenſe and perception: which alſo is there
n againſt the Carteſians, cap. 30. Now, while Mr.
makes only the perception of Chriſt as God-man, to
omplex intellectual idea, but the perception of Chriſt
n to be a ſimple idea of ſenſation or imagination, dif-
from and going before that which is complex and in-
tual, it is plain, that that naked ſenſe or ſimple imag-
on, thus deſtitute of underſtanding, reaſon, and reflex
in itſelf can by no means include the rational knowl-
of any truth whatſoever, far leſs of the object of faith.
ſenſe and perception of brutes may be brought in to
are with any naked or ſimple ſenſitive apprehenſion,
nder the rule and conduct of a rational ſoul, and the
ectual faculty thereof.

CHAP. II.

IR the further clearing of this ſubject I propoſed, in the
/ place, to ſpeak of the glorious perſon of our Immanuel
man, and the myſterious conſtitution thereof; ſo as it
appear that the humanity therein now ſubſiſting can be
bject of faith only, not of fancy, or an imaginary idea.
eat is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh; ſo
t, that not only natural ſenſe and imagination, but nat-
reaſon and philoſophy, are quite vain and inſufficient
elping us rightly to conceive any part of this myſtery.
ſophy is to be heard and regarded, when it declares
dictates *of right reaſon* concerning things that are ſub-

* *Gangræna Cart. cap.* 29.

ject to it: But, when it begins to judge about the myſtery of the incarnation of Chriſt, or any other thing that belongs to faith, it is to be exploded; becauſe, in the things that are above the reach of reaſon, and depend only upon divine revelation, it brings in nothing ſolid or true, but diſcovers itſelf to be vain or deceitful, Col. ii. 8. and that becauſe, as the ſame apoſtle ſays, 1 Cor. ii. 14 *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are only known to the Spirit of God.* The apoſtle, in that forecited text, does not indeed condemn philoſophy, but only the vanity and errors of philoſophers; (for, as the errors of divines do not belong to divinity, as parts, but as peſts of it, ſo neither do the errors and vanities of philoſophers belong to philoſophy): But yet a philoſopher, as ſuch, is nothing elſe but *animalis homo*, a natural man*; and reaſon itſelf, not enlightened by faith, belongs to that animality: therefore it is not poſſible it can reach towards ſaving knowledge; or, if he attempts to do ſo, it evaniſhes into bubbles or trifles. Nor needs this ſeem ſtrange: for, if brute animals, which judge exceeding well concerning things that belong to ſenſe, as of meat and drink, yet cannot judge of human affairs; then, by the ſame parity of reaſon, men, though they can determine what is right and good about human affairs, by the benefit of natural reaſon, or the light of nature; yet they cannot thereby judge of things divine or ſupernatural. There is a manifeſt abuſe of natural reaſon and philoſophy; as, (1.) When men attempt to deduce the very foundations of religion from rational principles. For, though the principles of right reaſon are true in themſelves, yet thence it cannot be drawn, what we ſhall judge concerning the incarnation of Chriſt, the Trinity, &c. which are to be deduced from higher principles, namely, from the revealed will of God in the word. Reaſon is a power diſcurſive from principles to concluſions; but it hath not in itſelf the principles of theſe things which are apprehended by faith. Therefore, for men to build here upon the ſand of their own natural principles, is both impudence and imprudence. (2.) It is alſo an abuſe of natural reaſon and philoſophy, when it oppoſes its principles, which are true in the order of nature, to the principles of theology, which are far above nature. For example, it is true, That nothing can be produced out of nothing: That quite different and divers ſpecies cannot be united in the ſame ſubject, and the like: But theſe are to be underſtood according to the courſe of nature, and the power of a finite agent. Theſe

* *See Davenant on Col. p.* 237.

philoſophers therefore err, who would thence conclude againſt the creation of the world, or the incarnation of God; which the ſcriptures declare are done, not by the power of natural cauſes, but by the omnipotent power of God. Hence, it is a good rule*, theology never contradicted right natural reaſon, but ofttimes exceeds it; and ſo ſeems to oppoſe it: For right reaſon ſays not abſolutely, that theſe things cannot be, but that they cannot be by any finite power; which theology alſo declares. If things therefore of that nature†, let reaſon ſubmit to revelation, as Hagar to Sarah: Let it ſuffer itſelf to be admoniſhed and corrected: But, if he will not obey, then caſt away the maid ſervant, the bond-woman, Gal iv. 30. Now, all this muſt be ſaid even of natural reaſon and human underſtanding: How much more muſt ſenſe and natural imagination be rejected and caſt out, when it is brought in, under the ſtrange term of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, to be helpful to the right knowledge and underſtanding of this great myſtery of godlineſs, an incarnate God. But again, (3.) Reaſon and philoſophy turn uſeleſs and hurtful to religion, when men obtrude their errors, ſometimes deduced by falſe conſequences from true principles; as if theſe errors were lawful or native concluſions. Thus many, under the name of philoſophers, have taught the dreams and viſions of their own head. On this account ſome of the fathers bitterly reproved the ancient heretics, and cried out both againſt philoſophy and philoſophers, particularly Tertullian‡; who ſays, "They affect the truth, but in affecting they corrupt it; that, by the wit of philoſophers, all hereſy is animated and enlivened; and that all the dictates of heretics, when they freeze and cannot fly, they find to themſelves a ſeat and reſt in the thickets of Ariſtotle." But this is to be ſaid, not of true and ſober philoſophy, remaining within its own ſphere, but of that wanton and deceitful learning, under the name of philoſophy, which vents the opinions of private men for the dictates of truth itſelf, and ventures to mix itſelf with things above its reach.

The caution the apoſtle Paul gives againſt vain philoſophy, Col ii 8. is premiſed to the moſt notable account he gives of the perſon of Chriſt in the following verſe. And this is the occaſion of my having premiſed theſe things on that ſubject before I come to ſpeak of the glorious perſon of Chriſt: For, if vain philoſophy and carnal reaſonings muſt be excluded, not only as uſeleſs, but hurtful, in contemplating this won-

* *Thomæ quæſt. diſp. de fide*, art. 10. See Davenant in Col. p. 238.
† *Clem. Alexan.* lib. i. ‡ See Davenant in Col. p. 238.

derful object, much more muſt vain fancy and carnal imagination be ſo. If this myſtery exceeds the rational and intellectual powers of nature, much more muſt every part of it exceed the ſenſitive and corporeal powers of men; which relate only to things outwardly viſible and corporeal, but to nothing intelligible and ſpiritual.

The glory of Chriſt's perſon is deſcribed, Col. ii. 9. in theſe words, *In him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*; that is, the whole Deity, and all the attributes of God, dwelleth in Chriſt perſonally, by virtue of the hypoſtatical or perſonal union of the divine with the human nature of Chriſt. Here, to follow the learned Davenant, he ſhows how the word bodily is to be underſtood perſonally; becauſe, as ſouls are ſometimes put for perſons, as in theſe words, *The ſoul that ſinneth ſhall die*, that is, the perſon; and we read of Jacob's kindred, three ſcore and fifteen ſouls, that is, perſons; ſo bodies are ſometimes put for perſons; as when it is ſaid, *Some body hath touched me*, that is, ſome perſon; ſo here bodily, that is, perſonally. The eternal Son of God did ſo join the human nature to himſelf, as that the perſon of the Λόγος, the Word, which ſubſiſted before only in the divine nature, now ſubſiſts alſo in the human; which never had a diſtinct perſonality of its own, but was aſſumed or taken into the divine perſon of the Son of Chriſt. Therefore, there are not two perſons, one of the man, the other of the Son of God; But the divine nature is ſo unite to the human, that therein it ſubſiſts bodily, that is, hypoſtatically. Hence the ſon of David is called JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. and, *God bleſſed for ever*, Rom ix. 5. The eternal Son of God became man, not by aſſuming the perſon, but the nature of man. Man is ſaid to be aſſumed, becauſe the human ſoul and body was aſſumed. The perſon of man is not ſaid to be aſſumed, becauſe that ſoul and body was not united to one another in a perſon, before they were united to the perſon of the Son of God. The human nature of Chriſt, then hath no perſonality in itſelf: The perſon of our Immanuel is no other than the ſecond perſon of the glorious Trinity; the Word that was made fleſh. Hence, it is argued among ſchoolmen, whether the perſon of Chriſt, after his incarnation, is compounded. But this they aſſert, not in reſpect of parts, as if the perſon of Chriſt was now compoſed of a divine and human nature, as of parts; but in reſpect of number, becauſe now it ſubſiſts of two natures, which, before the incarnation, ſubſiſted only in the divine. Nor does this militate *againſt the* immutability of Chriſt's divine nature and perſon: For there was here no real change in him, but a rela-

ative one. As God, who from all eternity was not the creator, yet in time became a creator; this new relation of God to the creature, which he brought from nothing to being, made no change in God but the creature: So the Son of God, who was not man, nor incarnate from all eternity, being made man and incarnate in time, this made no change in him; becauſe the change is made in the human nature, which was aſſumed, not in the divine, that did aſſume. The Son of God was not man, nor incarnate, while he did not yet actually aſſume the human nature: But he is ſaid to be man and incarnate, in ſo far as he gave that nature a ſubſiſtence in his own divine perſon. But this he did, not by changing his divine nature, but by uniting to himſelf that human nature. To become man abſolutely, imports a real change in the ſubject acquiring the human nature, as when man was made of the duſt; becauſe the ſubject that was made man, loſt its former nature. But, when the perſon of the Son of God became man, and was incarnate, this is not underſtood to be by any new tranſmutation or change of the divine nature; but the Word was made fleſh by uniting to himſelf the human nature, not by changing the divine nature.

It hath been objected, That, if the human nature of Chriſt ſubſiſts in the perſon of the Son of God, and not in its own proper perſonality, then the man Chriſt is more imperfect than all other men; becauſe all other men are human perſons, or have a human perſonality, and are (*ſuppoſita*, or) ſubjects ſubſiſting in that nature: And only Chriſt, as he is man, hath not this perſonality, but ſubſiſts in a divine perſon, the Λόγος, by hypoſtatical union. *Anſwer*, That the proper perſonality of the human nature is not wanting on account of the defect of ſome things requiſite to its perfection; but on account of the addition of ſome things which far excels its nature; namely, on account of its union to the divine perſon. Chriſt, therefore, is not more imperfect, but more perfect, excellent, and eminent than other men; becauſe, whereas, in us, our human nature ſubſiſts in its own proper perſonality, in Chriſt it ſubſiſts in a divine: And to ſubſiſt in God by a hypoſtatical union, is much more noble and eminent than to ſubſiſt in itſelf. Now, a man that is not a human perſon, having no perſonality, but that of the eternal Son of God, or a human nature ſubſiſting in that manner, is ſuch a myſterious object as tranſcends the moſt capacious underſtanding of men or angels. By faith only we believe the myſtery; by reaſon we cannot comprehend it. *Intellectual powers* of human nature cannot conceive *of a human nature thus* ſubſiſting; what then can corporeal

powers, or imaginary ideas do? To conceive of human nature otherwise than thus subsisting in the divine person of the Son of God, and to think it the human nature of Christ, is to conceive a falshood, a lie. Of which more afterwards.

The human nature of Christ consists of a true body and a reasonable soul; and yet as man he is not a person. The reason is, because the same moment wherein his soul was created, and his body conceived, they were unite to the Divinity. If they had existed separately from the Λόγος, the Word, they would have had their own human personality; but, because they at once began to be, and to be united to the eternal Word, this humanity necessarily behoved to subsist in the person of the Word that was made flesh, or that assumed the human: and the divinity being incomparably more excellent than the humanity, therefore it is the human nature assumed into personality with it. Two objections of heretics may here be touched at, for farther illustration of the mystery.

1. If in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, then the Samosatenians, and others that deny the Trinity of the persons in the Godhead, alledge, that we will be obliged to admit, that all the three persons of the Trinity were incarnate; because the plenitude of the Deity dwells in Christ incarnate, the whole and perfect divine essence dwells in him. *Answer*, The whole divine nature was incarnate, not because incarnate in all the persons; but because in the person of the Son there is nothing wanting of the perfection of the divine nature: For, seeing the divine nature or essence is spiritual, there cannot be, nor can it be supposed, that there are parts thereof; but, wherever the divine nature is, there it is wholly and perfectly: Therefore the whole divine nature was incarnate; but not in so far as it is considered absolutely, and in itself, as common to all the persons; but in so far as it is limited by personal property, or in the person of the Son. *Una persona est totus Deus*, Luth. tom. 2. But it is urged, The works of the glorious Trinity are undivided; and therefore, if the second person assumed the human nature, the Father and the Spirit did the same; and, consequently, not the Son only, but the three persons were incarnate. To which it is answered, To assume flesh imports two things, namely, the action itself, or unition of that flesh, and the term or limit of this action; namely, the person to which this flesh is unite or adapted: The former, namely, the action, is common to the three persons; for the Father and the Holy Ghost did jointly work *and operate the* incarnation of Christ: But the latter, name-

ly, the term and limit of that action, belongs only to the Son; for the whole Trinity adapted that flesh to him alone. If a father give a wife to his son, and the son joins her in marriage to himself, both are rightly said to have made the marriage; but with this difference, that the father coupled the bride to the son, but the son took her to himself. Even so, in the incarnation of Christ, each person wrought out this connection of the human nature with the divine; but so as the Father married the Son to our nature, and the Son betrothed it to himself. As, therefore, in the foresaid example, it is not the father, but the son that is said to be married, though the will and work of both the father and the son concurs in the contriving and making that marriage; so here, it is not the Father, but the Son that is incarnate; though both concur in the making and uniting that flesh to the person of the Son. And what is said of the Father is also understood of the Holy Spirit. Hence in scripture it is said only of the *Word* that he *was made flesh*, John i. 14 yet the work of incarnation is ascribed to the whole Trinity: Of the Father it is said, *he prepared his salvation*, Luke ii. 31. Heb. x. 5. Christ says, *a body hast thou prepared me*: of the Son it is said, that *he took on him the seed of Abraham*, Heb. ii. 16. and of the Holy Ghost it is said, that he *overshadowed the virgin*. Luke i. 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* Here is room and ground for faith; but no footing for fancy and imagination.

2. It is objected, If the human nature of Christ be hypostatically united to the divine, then the whole human nature is unite to the whole divine nature; which, being spiritual, is not divisible into parts; and, if so, then wherever the divine nature is, there is the human, and, consequently, we pass into the camp of the Ubiquitarians. *Answer*, The consequence is denied; because the personal union is constitute, so as the properties of both natures are preserved. It is the property of the human nature to be circumscribed within certain limits; and it does not lose this property by union to a nature that is infinite: For, when the natures unite are not proportionable, they are not made so by the personal union; because the union only joins, but does not change the natures: Since, therefore, a finite nature and an infinite are not proportionable; neither is the divine nature circumscribed, nor the human infinitely extended, by that personal union. The human nature is indeed inseparably unite to

breath his perſonality is mentioned; as if it were of purpoſe to lead them off from all vain imaginary ideas about his body, and from what was the proper object of ſenſe, to the proper object of faith, the perſon of Chriſt. No figure is more ordinary than that whereby a perſon is denominate from that which cannot be ſuppoſed to be a perſon, but a body, or a part of the body, as I ſhewed above. Thus, a perſon may be denominated from the very duſt of his body in the grave; as, when it is ſaid, Here lies ſuch a man, ſuch a woman, ſuch a perſon; and yet the duſt is no perſon. But, when a perſon is denominate by it, then that perſon thus denominated is the object of the underſtanding or intellect; while the duſt is but the object of ſenſe or imagination. Now, Mr Robe's doctrine ſays, none can believe what the angel here ſaid, without an imaginary idea of a body, a grave, a place where that body lay. Well, but what is that to the purpoſe of faith or ſpiritual underſtanding? Theſe are not the objects of faith, but of ſenſe; and ſenſe muſt indeed perceive what belongs to ſenſe. But theſe ideas of ſenſation belong no more to faith than earth does to heaven. The angel here directs them to truths that are the objects of faith, viz. (1.) That Chriſt was not there, viz. bodily. (2.) That he is riſen. (3.) That there was the place where the Lord lay. None of theſe, as they are truths, can be the objects of ſenſe and imagination; but only of knowledge and faith, as may be cleared hereafter. But to return to my diſcourſe about the perſon of Chriſt:

When Chriſt became man, he did not become another perſon than he was before, but aſſumed our nature into his former perſonality. O myſterious! when it is ſaid Chriſt became like unto us in all things, ſin only excepted, if it be ſaid, Chriſt did not become a human perſon as we are, therefore he did not become like unto us in all things. *Anſ.* The word muſt be underſtood of his becoming like unto us in all things relating to the human nature and the whole ſubſtance thereof, ſoul and body; but perſonality is the manner of the ſubſiſtence of that nature in itſelf, or in another. And in this God was pleaſed mercifully to alter the courſe of nature with reference to Chriſt's humanity. Leſt it ſhould be ſurpriſing to the inconſiderate readers, to hear that Chriſt as man is no perſon, and that they who ſaw Chriſt on the earth only with the eye of fleſh, and not with the eye of faith, they ſaw not the perſon of Chriſt, they only ſaw a body which was not the object of faith, but of ſenſe, in the propriety of ſpeech; it will perhaps be requiſite that I explain this matter a little more, before I go further. Therefore,

That Chriſt aſſumed not the perſon of man, but man's nature only, is evident. Chriſt did not aſſume a nature perſonated, but one individuated, as the learned expreſs it, and which never had an exiſtence in itſelf, but in another ſubject, namely, his own divine perſon. If Chriſt had aſſumed man's perſon, then either he aſſumed a pre exiſtent perſon, which in the aſſumption remained a perſon, or a pre exiſtent perſon, which in the aſſumption ceaſed to be a perſon.

But, as to the firſt, That Chriſt aſſumed a human perſon, which in the aſſumption ceaſed not to be a perſon, but remained ſo, is both falſe and impoſſible. That it is falſe, appears from this that the human nature of Chriſt is not a perſon, otherwiſe there would be in Chriſt two perſons; which is falſe and erroneous; for in him, the ſame which is the perſon of God is the perſon of man: otherwiſe what is ſaid of the Son of God, could not be ſaid of the Son of man, nor what is ſaid of the Son of man could be ſaid of the Son of God; and, conſequently, it would alſo follow that the virgin Mary did not conceive and bear a ſon, whoſe name was *Immanuel, God with us*, or a child, whoſe name was *the mighty God*. (2) But, as it is falſe, ſo it is impoſſible, that Chriſt aſſumed a human perſon, which, notwithſtanding the aſſumption, ceaſed not to be a perſon; becauſe it is impoſſible that a human nature can be a perſon, and yet not exiſt in itſelf at once but only in another ſubject: For hence, if the human nature of Chriſt were a perſon, or a nature exiſting in a created perſon, then the perſon of the Son of God could not be the ſubject or perſon thereof; for it is impoſſible for the ſame whole created nature to be at once immediately in more ſubjects than one, in the ſame mode or manner wherein a nature is in a ſubject; more eſpecially, if one of theſe ſubjects be uncreated, and another created. It is evident then, that Chriſt aſſumed not a pre exiſtent perſon, which, notwithſtanding the aſſumption, remained a perſon.

Secondly, Nor did Chriſt aſſume a pre exiſtent perſon, which, in the aſſumption thereof, ceaſed to be a perſon: For anent this we may ſay, that it is not impoſſible, but that it is falſe. (1) I ſay, it is not impoſſible; becauſe we may well ſuppoſe, that it is poſſible for God to make a nature that ſubſiſted in itſelf as a ſubject to ſubſiſt in another ſubject than itſelf, without deſtroying the nature; becauſe a created eſſence exiſting in itſelf, or in another, depends not upon that eſſence, but upon the divine will: He can make that created ſubſtance, which he willed to exiſt in itſelf as its ſubject, to exiſt in a divine ſubject, and not in itſelf. Therefore, ſuppoſe the human nature of Chriſt, before it was aſſumed, had actually exiſted in

itself; yet, by the divine will, it could have been made to exist actually in a divine subject, as it now does. Some have objected, That no creature can exist but in itself, as its subject; because its existing thus in itself, imports no more but its relation to its efficient cause, by which it formally exists in itself: Therefore, while that creature remains, it cannot possibly be separated from that relation it hath to its efficient, and so, without the destruction of the creature's subsistence, cannot but exist in itself. To which it is answered, That though the created substance remaining, there cannot be removed from it, by any power whatsoever, all the relation it hath to its efficient cause, seeing a creature existing in itself as its subject, is only God's causing it to exist so; yet it is possible, by a divine power, that what relates necessarily to the efficient cause one way, may relate to the same another way. One relation to its efficient cause may be separated from it, and another relation given. Hence, if God should make a created substance existing in *itself* as its subject, to exist in *himself* as its subject, in the way wherein the human nature of Christ exists, then, after the assumption, it would only be otherwise related to the efficient cause than before; the same cause making that which it before made to exist in itself, to exist in another. But, though thus it may be supposed to be not impossible for Christ to have assumed a pre-existent person, which in the assumption thereof would cease to be a person, so as no more to subsist in itself; yet, (2) it is false, that he assumed a pre-existent person, which upon its assumption ceased to be a person. Some have attempted to prove the falsehood of this, by saying, that this would not have been an assumption of our nature, but a consumption of it. But this reason is not valid; because the Son of God might have assumed (say some) one man actually pre-existing, without ruining his nature, though that nature had ceased to exist in a created person; for hence there had been no consumption of that nature, but a sublimation or exalting of it. But the true reason why the human nature of Christ was never a person, is, because it never existed in itself. Christ assumed man's nature, not man's person. A person is something existing in itself: *Persona est per se una*, or *per se sonans*. But the human nature assumed by the eternal Word never existed in itself, because it was formed and assumed at once. As divines speak of the soul's creation, and infusion into the body, *that in its creation it is infused, and in its infusion it is created*; so it may be said of our human nature, when assumed by the Son of God, that in the assumption it was made or formed, and in the formation it was as-

ſumed: Inſomuch as if it were to be ſuppoſed, that the Son of God, the ſecond perſon of the glorious Trinity, ſhould lay aſide his human nature; then that human nature would neither be a perſon, nor could ſubſiſt in itſelf, unleſs there was a preſent divine influence for the preſervation of it, that it might ſubſiſt in itſelf otherwiſe it would wholly ceaſe to be*. But now that divine influence is not given to it for that end, that it may ſubſiſt in itſelf, but for this end, that it may exiſt in an infinitely more worthy and glorious ſubject than itſelf; that is, in the eternal Word: And therefore, on a double account, it is not a perſon; becauſe a perſon both exiſts by itſelf, and is not unite to a higher than itſelf: but Chriſt's human nature does not exiſt by itſelf, although it be unite to a higher than itſelf by a perſonal union. Therefore this human nature of Chriſt is no perſon. Though the human nature aſſumed by the eternal Word had all the eſſentials of human nature, as other men have, and, by the eſſential principles of human nature, that nature in every other man is a perſon; yet it does not follow, that therefore the human nature of Chriſt is a perſon; becauſe in him there is no divine influence preſent for making that human nature exiſt in itſelf, but in himſelf: But, in other men, this influence is always preſent for making them exiſt in themſelves. If the human nature aſſumed had pre-exiſted before the hypoſtatical union, it would have been a perſon, and the Son of God would have aſſumed it into perſonal union: But then, by that aſſumption he would have removed from it the ground and reaſon of created perſonality, by removing from it the firſt influence neceſſary for its exiſting in itſelf, and making it to exiſt in an uncreated perſon. But, becauſe that human nature which the Son of God aſſumed, was at once made and aſſumed; therefore it was never a perſon. For, *in the fulneſs of time God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman. The Word was made fleſh*, Gal. iv. 4. John i. 14.

The Son of God did not aſſume a nature perſonated, as was ſaid, having any being or exiſtence in or by itſelf, as the ſubject thereof, but only a nature individuated, which never exiſted in itſelf, but exiſts in the divine perſon of the Son of God. Upon this aſſumption, which, with relation to the perſon aſſuming, is active, and with relation to the nature aſſuming, paſſive; upon this, I ſay, follows the everlaſting marriage union between the nature of God and the nature of man, in the perſon of the eternal Son. This union is ſuch, that

* *De Veris loc. term ontol.* p. 57. Subſtantia eſt ens per ſe exiſtens: i. e. cujus ea eſt in exiſtendo ſufficientia, ut alio, cui ceu ſubjecto inſit, non indigeat.

the two natures though ſtill diſtinct, yet are ſo inſeparable that they cannot be lawfully ſundered in the mind of any who contemplate this wonder as if they were any different ſubſiſtences; for both the divine and human nature ſubſiſts in one and the ſame divine ſubject or perſon. It is true the two natures of Chriſt may be ſeparately conſidered in the understanding philoſophically by an intellectual idea or a mental ſpeculation, which is not ſaving faith; for it is peculiar to ſaving faith, to ſee and behold the glory of God in the face of Chriſt, or to ſee the man Chriſt, as he is Immanuel God man in one perſon. This faith differs as much from, and is as far above mere intellectual ideas, as intellectual ideas are above corporeal and imaginary ideas; yea much farther than reaſon is above ſenſe; even as far as what is divine is above human, and ſupernatural is above merely natural.

Concerning this wonderful marriage union between the divine and human nature in one perſon, it may be ſaid, as above, that though it was the whole glorious Trinity that made the marriage, yet it was not the whole Trinity that was married to our nature. Of this union it can be ſaid that the human nature is unite to the divine perſon, and the divine perſon is unite to the human nature. But the aſſumption, as it imports an action, cannot be ſpoke of the human nature, and, as it is paſſively conſidered, it cannot be ſpoke of the divine nature; for the divine perſon of the Son unied himſelf to our nature. It is not in this as in human nature, ſoul and body makes up one nature and one perſon; but here the divine and human nature are not one, but two natures and one perſon: for, in human nature, neither the body by itſelf, nor the ſoul by itſelf, have their complete mode of exiſting; therefore the union of ſoul and body makes but one nature. But the divine nature of Chriſt hath by itſelf the moſt complete mode of exiſting, without any poſſibility of a change thereof; and therefore, the human nature exiſting not properly in the divine nature, but in the divine perſon of Chriſt, the natures are diſtinct, and the perſon is one. As Chriſt aſſumed not a human perſon, but a human nature, ſo the human nature of Chriſt is not one nature with the divine, but one perſon; the human nature being aſſumed by Chriſt without a human perſonality: therefore, without any change of the divine nature*, the hu-

* Maccovii regulæ theol. & phil. p. 124, 125. Perſonalitas divinæ Chriſti naturæ eſt per ſe, humanæ vero per aſſumptionem; quia divina & humana Chriſti natura non æque faciunt ad conſtitutionem perſonæ, quia hoc repugnat æternitati & immutabilitati divinæ naturæ, nam quod ab æterno ſubſiſtit, ad ejus ſubſiſtentiæ conſtitutionem nihil poteſt facere id, quod in tempore demum factum eſt.——Per aſſumptionem naturæ

nature ſubſiſts in the divine perſonality. Hence we can
y ſay, the man Chriſt is God, becauſe we ſpeak of the per-
which includes the human nature; but none can ſay that
ſt as man is God, becauſe we then ſpeak of the human
re, which includes not the divine perſon. Hence alſo,
gh this be a truth, That Chriſt is a man, yet it is not
h that the human nature of Chriſt is a man; for a man is
rſon, but the human nature of Chriſt is no perſon.
hat the human nature of Chriſt is not the man who is
ſt, I prove thus:—The Son of God is the man who is
ſt. The man who is Chriſt did not aſſume himſelf, but
human nature: Therefore the human nature is not the
who is Chriſt.
gain, the Son of God did not aſſume the perſon of a man,
the man who is Chriſt is a perſon: Therefore he did not
ne that man who is Chriſt. That man who is Chriſt was
aſſumed by the perſon of the Son of God; becauſe that
who is Chriſt is the perſon of the Son of God in two na-
s. The divine perſon is the ſubject wherein both natures,
ne and human, do ſubſiſt. And here, leſt any miſtake the
d as improper, to call the divine perſon the ſubject of the
an nature, it is to be conſidered, that the word ſubject
does not import any thing like inferiority, but, on the
rary, a kind of ſuperiority, as being that which ſupports
ſuſtains any thing ſo as it may be ſaid to ſubſiſt in it.
ce there ſeems to be little difference between a perſon
a ſubject, except in the different conſideration of it.
s the human nature of Chriſt is not a ſubject, becauſe it
not ſubſiſt in and by itſelf; whereas a ſubject ſignifies
t exiſts in itſelf. Nor is the human nature of Chriſt a
on becauſe every perſon is a ſubject exiſting in itſelf:
the difference between a perſon and a ſubject (or *ſup-*
poſit) may be this, that they are not convertible terms;
though every perſon be a ſubject; yet every ſubject is not
rſon. Where there is but one perſon, there cannot be
ſubjects wherein that perſon exiſts. But Chriſt is one per-
Therefore there cannot be two ſubjects, but one, which
e ſubject of both natures, the divine from eternity, and
human in time. Now from what is ſaid, it appears that
he human nature of Chriſt cannot be the object of an im-
ary idea, nay, nor of an intellectual one, ſo as we can
k upon him as man, the ſame way, and with the ſame

ne in ὑποστάσει divinæ, nulla facta eſt mutatio in divina, ſed tan-
ſ humana natura. Omnis enim mutatio eſt vel generatio vel cor-
io, vel augmentatio vel diminutio, vel alteratio vel motus localis:
: autem nihil in divinam naturam cadit.

powers and faculties as we think of other men: And that because, (1.) The human nature of Christ is a nature unite to a higher than itself; and therefore a nature that hath not its subject of existence in itself, like the human nature in other men, but exists in the subject or person of the higher nature to which it is unite. (2.) Other men are persons, but Christ as man is no person: Therefore we cannot think of Christ as man, nor of his human nature, as we do of other men. (3.) The human nature of Christ is no subsistence; because in itself it does not exist, as God makes other men to do. Nothing is a subsistence which does not exist in and by itself, by divine appointment. (4.) The human nature of Christ is not, as schoolmen say, *res naturæ*, a natural thing; because a natural thing is a thing existing, having in itself a nature:—but Christ's human nature hath not a nature in itself; but other men have a nature in themselves, and so a personal subsistence, but Christ's humanity hath not not that in itself. Dr. Arrowsmith on John i. p. 207. says, "If Christ had only assumed the person of a man, then there must have been two persons in Christ, a person assuming, and a person assumed; yea then that only person which Christ assumed, should have been advanced and saved.——With us the soul and body being united, make a person. But, in Christ, the soul and body were so united, as to have their subsistence, not in themselves, (as in us), but in the Godhead. No sooner was the soul united to the body, but soul and body had subsistence in the second person of the Trinity; so, not the assuming of a person, but the nature of a man, common to all the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. Therefore, *he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham*, Heb ii. 16. *Seed*, the first element of our nature, before our persons come to have any subsistence."

Again, that Christ, as he is man, is not a person, may be cleared further thus. If the human nature were a person, it behoved either to be an incarnate person, or a created person. It cannot be an incarnate person; because a temporal cannot be the reason of an eternal personality. It was the Son of God that was incarnate. To say the human nature was incarnate, is absurd. It cannot be a created person; because Christ is not more persons than one. And besides, whatever was fit or suitable to Christ as man, that was assumed; but Christ did not assume the person, but the nature: Therefore, Christ, as man, is no person; because neither nature in general, nor human nature in particular, is the reason of personality in Christ, but the divine nature itself, with the property constituting a person. Hence, (1.) It cannot be said of Christ, as of other men, that, because he is a man, he is a person;

for their ſingle human nature, ſoul and body unite, conſtitutes their perſonal being. *Perſona eſt per ſe una*; but it is not ſo with Chriſt. (2.) The dignity of human nature in another man, is, that, as he is a man, he is a perſon; but the dignity of Chriſt's human nature lies not at all in this, that it is a perſon; but the dignity thereof is incomparably and infinitely greater, when it ſubſiſts in the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, by its myſterious hypoſtatical union with the eternal divine nature of the Son of God. Hence, (3) Natural imagination cannot conceive a human nature that is not a perſon, no more than it can conceive a predicate without a ſubject, a mountain without a valley, or a property, ſuch as white or black, without conceiving ſomething or other as the ſubject wherein theſe properties are to be ſeen: Conſequently, even the human nature of Chriſt, which is not a perſon, cannot be the object of an imaginary idea, but only of faith upon a divine teſtimony. True, I have read among the arguments of ſuch as would make Chriſt as man to be a perſon, this among the reſt, viz Actions or deeds (ſay they) are of ſubjects; that is, there cannot be an action or deed without a ſubject, who is the agent or doer of that deed: But Chriſt as man did many actions. Therefore Chriſt as man is a ſubject. But now the ſubject of a rational and intellectual nature is a perſon: Therefore Chriſt as man is a perſon. But the anſwer is, That though actions are the actions of ſubjects, yet the ſubject acts by nature. Hence, though Chriſt as man did many things, it will not follow that Chriſt as man is a ſubject, (or *ſuppoſitum*), but that Chriſt is the ſubject of the human nature. The human nature was not the ſubject, or the perſon acting, but Chriſt. Thus Chriſt as man was born of a virgin; yet the perſon born was Chriſt, who is God-man. Chriſt as man was crucified; yet the perſon crucified was Chriſt. As man he aroſe and aſcended; but the perſon riſing and aſcending was Chriſt. Of which more afterwards.

Chriſt being made like unto us in all things, ſin only excepted, it might here be alledged further, that the human nature of Chriſt hath whatſoever human nature hath in a created ſubject; but the human nature of every other man is a human nature exiſting in a created ſubject, that is, exiſting in itſelf: Therefore, if Chriſt be one like unto us in all things, he behoved to be like unto us in this, which is the eſſential property of human nature, to exiſt in a created ſubject. If this were the caſe then we might think of Chriſt as man, in the way we think of other men, namely, of a human nature, as a human nature *exiſting in* itſelf. But it is otherwiſe in Chriſt; *his human nature is a human* nature indeed exiſting; and

this he is like unto us in all things relative to a human nature, abſtract from a perſon, or a ſubject wherein it exiſts: It exiſts, as divines expreſs it, *in actu, ſed non in actu in ſeipſo*; it actually exiſts, but not actually in itſelf: For ſo it never exiſted. To conceive of other men is poſſible; becauſe we conceive of their human nature in a human ſubject or perſon called man: But the human nature of Chriſt, as it is his human nature, is inconceivable; becauſe the divine ſubject out of which it does not exiſt, is inconceivable. The manner of that exiſtence is unfathomable by our finite underſtanding, and altogether ſupernatural. Therefore Mr. Robe can no more conceive of Chriſt as he does of other men, than he can conceive what is inconceivable, by both men and angels: For *great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh.* Or, if he conceives of him, as of other men, he conceives nothing but vanity. Why to conceive of other men, is to conceive of human nature in itſelf, that is, exiſting in a ſubject called man. But human nature in itſelf is not the human nature of Chriſt, nor the object of faith. To ſpeak of the human nature of Chriſt in itſelf as if that could be any part of the object of faith, is to ſpeak without knowledge; where there is no poſſibility of parting this object of it, that we now ſpeak of, without the greateſt abſurdity: For, to conceive of a nature without a ſubject, or abſtracting from the ſubject wherein it exiſts, is the ſame with conceiving a nature without an exiſtence; which is a deſtroying the very exiſtence of that nature. And thus the abſurd notion of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, lands in making Chriſt's human nature neither the object of faith, nor ſenſe, nor any thing at all, but a mere nothing. I had therefore more than reaſon to pray, as in my former letter, that all the Lord's people may be ſaved from ſuch imaginary religion. In oppoſition to which, I aſſert, That the human nature of Chriſt, as it exiſts and ſubſiſts in the divine perſon of the Son of God which is the only way wherein it doth ſubſiſt, though it can be in no ſort the object of any imaginary idea; yet it is the greateſt truth and reality, and the object only of ſpiritual knowledge and of ſaving faith. This I ſhall afterwards further demonſtrate from ſcripture and reaſon. Further,

Other men are ſo called, and ſo to be thought of, as having a created human nature in a created human ſubject. There a mere creature is the object of the idea. But the human nature of Chriſt is to be thought of as a created human nature in an uncreated divine ſubject. This exceeds all created *thoughts*, and is only the object of faith, or of a believing *thought*. I can truly ſay, the man Chriſt, as the object of

faith, is every where; because I speak of the person, the divine subject, wherein the human nature does subsist: But none can say, with truth, that Christ as man is every where: because then exclude the divine nature, and the divine person of Christ; and so exclude the object of faith. It is equally impossible then to have an imaginary idea of Christ's manhood or humanity subsisting in the Godhead of the Son, as it is impossible to have an imaginary idea of the Godhead, or Deity itself. Therefore the manhood and the humanity of Christ as it is the object of an imaginary idea, is no part of the object of faith; because under that consideration, it is no divine object, no divine subject, no divine nature, no divine person, an object not of divine faith, but of human fancy.

If satan, and all his hellish angels, had plotted a new scheme of divinity, for filling the thoughts of people with doctrine opposite to faith and destructive of the deity of our Redeemer, he could not, I think, have fallen upon a better method than to publish to the world, under the notion of true and sound divinity, the necessity of an imaginary idea of Christ as man; because as man he is not God. And so long as the devil can get this imagination fixed, never, never, never will they believe that he is God, or God man in one person. I am loath to suppose that this hath been the strain of Mr Robe's doctrine hitherto, but I fear the defence of a delusive and imaginary work (as to the body of the subjects of it) under the notion of its being divine, hath led them into a snare of delusive and imaginary doctrine; which, even in the very way wherein he expresses it, is wholly irreconcileable with orthodoxy. And in this I make an appeal to all the unbiassed sound divines in the christian world; not excepting Popish authors themselves, who are generally sound in the doctrine of the Trinity. Yea, I would appeal to all christian churches upon earth, if Mr Robe's accusing me of blasphemy in denying the human nature of Christ to be the object of faith, be not a charge without any foundation, except that of gross ignorance? and if this doctrine of imaginary ideas of Christ as man, be consistent either with philosophy or divinity?

CHAP. II.

Relating to the ignorance, error, unbelief, atheism and idolatry imported in the doctrine anent the imaginary idea of Christ as man.

AN imaginary idea of Christ as man, which Mr Robe speaks of so much, is neither good sense in philosophy nor divinity. In *philosophy*, it is gross nonsense; and, in divinity, *it is gross ignorance*. (1) In philosophy it is gross non-

ſenſe. If by man is underſtood both body and ſoul united in one perſon, or a rational creature of the human kind, the imaginary idea can only be about the body; but it requires an intellectual idea to think of a rational ſoul. So that, to ſpeak of a reaſonable creature, and make it conceivable by a faculty which only reaches to mere corporeal things, is an intolerable impoſition upon the common ſenſe of mankind. (2) In divinity it is groſs ignorance, to ſpeak of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man: For, ſince this idea can only reſpect corporeity, to conceive of Chriſt as man by ſuch an idea, is to conceive, I may ſuppoſe, either of a human perſon, or of a human nature without a human perſonality. To conceive of Chriſt as a human perſon is abominable; for his human nature is not a perſon, far leſs his human body, which can only be the object of an imaginary idea. Again, to conceive of a human nature without a human perſon, is impoſſible; for none can form the idea of a nature without a ſubject in which that nature exiſts, ſuitable to its nature: So that a human nature without a human perſon, or ſubject in which it exiſts, cannot be imagined. But the human nature of Chriſt hath no human perſon, nor human ſubject in which it exiſts; but only the perſon of the eternal Son of God, who is infinitely above all imaginary or corporeal ideas. Therefore, the human nature of Chriſt cannot be the object of an imaginary idea without the greateſt abſurdity, and the greateſt contradiction, both to common ſenſe, and the doctrine of faith.

We can no more conceive of Chriſt's human nature without conceiving of a human perſon, than we can conceive of a predicate without a ſubject. It is as impoſſible in nature to think, as I ſaid above, of a mountain without a valley, as to think of a human nature without a ſubject, in which it exiſts. And yet the human nature of Chriſt never exiſted in itſelf, or in a human ſubject, but in the perſon of the Son of God. Therefore to ſpeak of conceiving of the human nature of Chriſt by an imaginary idea, or any other way than by the faith of God's operation, leaning upon the teſtimony of God, is to graſp at a mere ſhadow, and bring down the myſteries of our holy religion, to be obvious to any notional fool in the world, that can form the image of a man in his head. O! how is image worſhip and idolatry thus ſubtilely preached up, and a vain imaginary religion brought in, inſtead of goſpel doctrine and ſpiritual truth, the truth as it is in Jeſus. May the Lord pity a generation given up to groſs deluſions and ignorant dreams.

Since Mr. Robe owns that nothing but what is corporeal *can be the object of* an imaginary idea, it is ſtrange that he

ld make any nature whatſoever the object of it; nature, e abſtract, being not only an incorporeal thing, but a ing; I know not if the ſchools would call it *ens rationis*: nuch more that he ſhould make a rational nature the ob- of ſuch an irrational idea. If ever an intellectual idea neceſſary for conceiving of human nature, it ſeems ne- y for conceiving of that nature, as it ſubſiſts in the per- f the Son of God. Yet Mr Robe makes that nature in to be only the object of an imaginary idea, as if it were a corporeal, not a rational nature. But, as the learned nock ſays, vol ii p 566. "The divine and human na- are united in one perſon; the higheſt intellectual nature, the loweſt rational nature ——Chriſt calls himſelf *the man*, to ſhew that he was really man in qualities, John 3. yet, ſaith he, *which is in heaven* to manifeſt that he is — God in heaven manifeſted in fleſh upon the earth; preſerving their entire properties ——The two natures diſtinct, yet united in one ſubſiſtence, and make but one n, as ſoul and body make one man."

imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, is an expreſſion of Mr. 's, which I defy any rational man to conſider, and yet it from being the groſſeſt abſurdity. Why, a corporeal of Chriſt as man, is an idea of a body and ſoul unite in uman nature. Let all the philoſophers on earth try their if they can conceive of ſuch an union, by a pure ſenſi- corporeal, or imaginative idea. Nay, according to the re of things, it is a mere impoſſibility; for a corporeal can conceive of no other union, but of corporeal things, as two bodies knit together. But, to conceive of a body a ſpirit unite in one human nature, requires at leaſt the urrence of an intellectual idea, and the exerciſe, not of ſenſation, but of reflection or of common judgment and rſtanding. Such is the cloſe connection between ſenſe reaſon in man, or between the imagination and under- ling, that, when by a ſenſitive or imaginative idea we ſee ew the body of a man, we at the ſame moment of time, n intellectual idea, ſee or know that he is a man; be- e body and ſoul make but one compoſition, one human na- , one man, one perſon. Now, it is not ſenſe alone with- reaſon, that can think of this compoſition: For from the that ſenſe has of the body, reaſon inſtantly which only ſeduce inferences, concludes it is a man it ſees. So that, ake the knowing of one to be a man, to be only the ob- of ſenſe, or of an imaginary idea, and not alſo of the in- ſt or underſtanding, is very abſurd; much more to make

Chriſt's human nature the object thereof, as Mr. Robe ſo fr quently doth. But, if we conceive of that, as we do of oth men, and, from the view or notion of his body, infer that is a man, as other men are, that is, a human perſon, as v muſt conceive all other men to be, when ſoul and body a unite; then we conceive a falſhood: Becauſe, though his ſo and body unite make a human nature, yet they make not human perſon; and therefore that human nature cannot conceived the ſame way, as we conceive of other men. Bu when by faith, (and not at all by fancy), we conceive of t human nature of Chriſt, we conceive alſo of his divine perſo ality, and ſee God in him; for faith's view of his human n ture implies it; becauſe, as ſoul and body in other men ma one perſon, ſo the human nature, and the divine nature Chriſt make but one perſon. So that, as when we ſee a h man body living ſenſe and reaſon ſees it is a human perſo even ſo, when we ſee the human nature of Chriſt believingl faith ſees his divine perſon; becauſe his divine and hum nature is one perſon. Hence, to ſpeak of an imaginary corporeal idea of Chriſt as man, or in his human nature, ſo uttered by Mr Robe, is the moſt ignorant phraſe that can uttered As long as man ſignifies a ſoul and bod unite, co ſtituting a human nature and perſon, a corporeal idea of it but a thinking on a body without a ſoul; and to call that man, and make this image in the mind a part of the object faith, be aſtoniſhed, O heavens! at this diſtracted divinity

If Mr Robe had ſpoke of the imaginar, idea of Chriſt as human body, inſtead of ſaying, as man, it would have be more tolerable philoſophy: becauſe the corporeal idea a the corporeal object would agree. But ſtill it would ha been intolerable divinity; becauſe, to convey to any man mind the abſtract idea of Chriſt's human body, would be obſcure the glorious object of faith with the thick ſtames a dark ſmoke of ſenſe. It is true in the human nature of Chri though the ſoul and body are diſtinct, ſo far as to require intellectual, as well as a corporeal idea to conceive of the jointly; yet they are not diſtinct natures, but one and t ſame human nature, conſiſting of ſoul and body. But I ſa the human nature of Chriſt may be conceived abſtractly fro the divine by the underſtanding; becauſe theſe are two di tinct natures in one perſon. Yet this metaphyſical diſtinc tion, however neceſſary in the divinity of the ſchools, for re futing the ſubtile errors of heretics on this point, and ſo be long not to any vain but neceſſary and uſeful philoſophy; ve *this ſeparate* conſideration of Chriſt's natures human and di

vine, and abſtract notion of one from the other, however it belongs to philoſophical ſpeculations, yet it is not the object of ſaving faith; which terminates only upon the perſon of Chriſt Immanuel God-man. The divine nature is not the object of ſaving faith ſeparate from the human, nor the human ſeparate from the divine; but the glorious perſon himſelf, in whom alone God is to be ſeen by faith as a reconciled God, 2 Cor. v. 19. and in whom, as God man, God and man can meet together.

As the ſcripture is no ſyſtem of philoſophical notions, ſo there is no ſuch word therein as that of Chriſt as man, in Mr. Robe's ſtile. And no wonder; for the ſcripture leads us to God only as the object of faith and worſhip: But Chriſt as man is not God, nor a perſon, but a nature. Chriſt is the name of a perſon, clothed with, and anointed to ſaving offices, but not Chriſt as man.

The ſcripture, though it never ſpeaks of Chriſt as man, yet frequently he is therein called by the name of a man, thus: *A man of ſorrows; after me cometh a man; the man of God's right hand; the man Jeſus Chriſt.* But then, by a uſual figure of a part for the whole, the perſon is underſtood. But, becauſe as man, he is no perſon, nor as man is he God; therefore, when we ſpeak of Chriſt as man, his perſonality is excluded from the conſideration, and only his manhood conſidered. Whereas, to ſpeak of Chriſt as a man, in the ſcripture ſenſe, is only to denominate the perſon by the nature he aſſumed. Thus Chriſt is frequently in ſcripture called the *Son of man*, that is, the perſon who is the Son of God, denominated by his human nature, as I have ſhewn above.

It is impoſſible (as I ſaid) to form an imaginary idea of a created nature in an uncreated ſubject; for that is the human nature of Chriſt. Let Mr. Robe try his hand, if he can get a limner to paint the likeneſs of a man, without painting the likeneſs of a perſon; or the figure of a human nature, without painting a human ſubject, in which it is ſuppoſed to exiſt. Even as little can he paint the figure of Chriſt as man in his mind, or form in his brain the idea of his human nature, without the idea of a human perſon: So that the idea he here contends for, muſt of neceſſity make him, whether he will or not, to be a rank Neſtorian; that is, of a principle, maintaining Chriſt to be a human perſon, as well as a divine one, and as having two perſons, as well as two natures; a principle condemned by all the chriſtian churches ever ſince the day of Neſtorius. It is true, Mr. Robe aſſerts, that Chriſt hath two diſtinct natures, *and one perſon.* But, if he maintains this as

his principle, then he must renounce this principle about the imaginary idea of Christ as man, as a principle hurtful, instead of being helpful to faith; otherwise he maintains direct contradictions; since there is no conceiving of Christ as man, or as to his human nature subsisting in the person of the Son of God, but only by faith of the operation of God; which will be a mystery imperceptible by human fancy, whether Mr. Robe will or not. This wisdom of God in a mystery is above reason itself; and much more above all the imaginary ideas of men.

To see Christ as man by an imaginary idea is a sight that will do no man any good; for God is not to be seen in Christ as man. God is indeed to be seen in the man Christ, that is, in the person Christ; but he cannot be seen in Christ as man, because, as man, he is not God. Yea, as man, in Mr. Robe's sense, God is not in him; for God dwells only in the person Christ, who is God-man; but Christ, as man, is not the person in whom God dwells. Never one beheld God in Christ as man. But glory to God, that thousands have seen God in the man Jesus Christ, who is *Immanuel, God with us.*

O the sinfulness of an imaginary idea of Christ as man! It is directly opposite to faith, and contradictory to it. The language of faith is, I see as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and am changed into the same image: I see the man Christ in the glass of the word of grace, the glorious gospel; and there I see the truth of his manhood and Godhead both in one person; and am charmed, enamoured, changed and transformed with the sight into his image, the image of God. But the language of the imaginary idea of Christ as man, is, I see Christ as man in the image that I frame of his human body in the glass of my own brain; and I am changed into the same image; that is, to the image of an idol, or to an idolater of whose images it is said, *Their maker is like unto them.* They are changed into the image of a man, or rather the image of an image; that is, to enthusiasts and imaginationists.

To have an imaginary idea of Christ as man, is a consideration of part of Christ's humanity, separately from his person, a consideration of that part of his human nature which is called the human body; and is a viewing of that, and not of him; for, as man, he is not a *him*, or a *person*: And therefore we do not think of him, but of it. For example, if I consider a blackamore to be white, as to the white of his eye, then I am considering *it*, not *him*: So it is here; when we think of Christ as to his human body, we are not thinking of him, but of it; for his human body is not himself, that is, it is not his *person*, it is not *he*. Nay, the thinking on *it*, leads

off from thinking on *him*, as long as our imagination or cy leads us to think of *it*, ſo long we are led off from think- ; on *him*. Every imaginary idea, therefore, of Chriſt as n, inſtead of being neceſſary to faith, is ſinful and hurtful, directly oppoſite to faith; which leads to think upon the rſon of Chriſt the God man, and ſo to think upon Chriſt him- f. Whereas the foreſaid idea of him as man neceſſarily car- s away our thoughts from him to a vain unprofitable notion. Mr. Robe grants what is true, that nothing but what is rely corporeal can be the object of an imaginary idea. But, ough a perſon may be denominated by his body figurative- , yet no mere corporeal thing or body can be a perſon real- : Therefore no real perſon, even human, can be the object a mere imaginary idea.

As there is adultery in the heart and theft in the heart, ſo ere is idolatry in the heart, and falſe worſhip: As, when we orſhip not the perſon of Chriſt, but the image of his human- y, which the imaginary idea of it makes upon the imagina- n, or that we form to ourſelves in our head. And this is ſin, I ſuppoſe, more riſe and frequent among God's people an we are aware of; and has little need to be encouraged r the doctrine of imaginary ideas relating to Chriſt's human- y, the moſt ſubtile image worſhip that can be thought of.

Mr. Robe, by his doctrine, denies that one can have the ith of Chriſt's being man, or the faith of his human nature, leſs he have the imaginary idea of his human body. But w widely do theſe two differ? They that look to Chriſt by ith, cannot but believe his humanity; becauſe they ſee his erſon God man. But they that look to him by fancy, or an aginary idea, cannot ſee his perſon, becauſe they look only his human body. Faith apprehends the perſon, and ſo takes a whole Chriſt, his perſonality. Fancy apprehends nothing t the corporeity in itſelf; which yet in itſelf is no more e object of faith, than any other human or natural body: hich, to make it a proper object of faith, is horrible idola- y. God only is the proper object of faith and worſhip. he human nature of Chriſt is not God. Therefore, the hu- an nature of Chriſt, in itſelf, is not the proper object of ith and worſhip. How then can it be ſo, as it is the object f an imaginary idea which looks to nothing but what is cor- oreal. That God only is the object of faith and worſhip, annot be denied; for it is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy od and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* That the human nature of hriſt is God, cannot be aſſerted without abſurd nonſenſe and laſphemy. Therefore the above concluſion muſt hold, That he human nature of Chriſt in itſelf is not the object of ſa

and how can his human body be so? How can that idea that takes up Christ's human body by itself, be helpful to that faith that views it, not by itself, but subsisting in the divine person of the Son of God? Indeed the natural idea cannot conceive otherwise, than Mr. Robe supposes. Therefore I say of a natural idea, as the apostle says of the *natural man*, it *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can* it do so, *for they are spiritually discerned.* The corporeal substance of Christ's human body is only the object of sense. Faith believes the truth of his corporeity, or that he hath a true body, as well as a reasonable soul; but faith cannot make that natural body of his, absent or present, its object of trust, or believe in it. This is idolatry.

Our Lord charges them with mental adultery, *that look on a woman to lust after her*, Matth v. 28. This sin may be as really committed, though a woman be not present to be looked at with the bodily eye. If a man shall frame an imaginary idea of a woman in his mind, to lust after her, it is mental adultery. Even so it is mental idolatry to form a picture of Christ's human nature in our mind, by an imaginary idea of it; and so to make that the object of faith or worship. To form that picture of his humanity in the mind, is a mental looking to it: And to make that the object of faith and worship is a falling down to that image; and committing mental idolatry with it. Indeed I know not who can justify themselves, and say, they are free of this sin in some measure. It is too natural, and, I believe to every saint, as long as he is in the flesh, and hath a body of sin and death carrying about with him. But I think it is possible for true believers, to take up a vast difference between that fancy or imagination of Christ as man, which can lead a person no farther, and that faith that apprehends him as God-man, and sees the glory of God in his person. The former is nothing but a shadow, and a mishapen apprehension, a notion of something in the head; and yet put in the room of Christ But here, to anticipate what will further occur: "Can you think of God-man," says Mr. Robe, "without thinking on him as man? Is it not necessary in the nature of the thing, that you have an imaginary idea or conception of his being man; otherwise you cannot conceive of his being God-man?" *Ans.* I think, neither the Godhead nor the manhood of Christ can be rightly conceived, but by faith. It is strange to alledge, as if by one means we conceive believingly of his manhood, and by another of his Godhead; as if the one were by an imaginary idea, and the other by faith and spiritual illumination; or as if the imaginary idea, which is a natural act, was helpful to spiritual act,

ings of the ſoul, when it is rather the quite reverſe. The ſpiritual believing view of Chriſt as God man, through the illumination of the Spirit, is the only means for enabling the natural faculties to any right thought or conception of Chriſt, and without which even his humanity is quite imperceptible, as it is the object of faith. This is one of the *things of Chriſt*, which fleſh and blood cannot, but our heavenly Father can reveal, and which the Spirit of Chriſt only can ſhew unto us, John xvi. 14. The natural man receiveth them not.

The ſight of what is corporal, as the object of the imaginary idea is, can never in itſelf fit and prepare us for ſeeing what is ſpiritual; but rather darkens the underſtanding, and makes it unfit; even as the god of this world does thereby blind the minds of them that believe not. The image of Chriſt's natural body in the fancy darkens the view of Chriſt, as the image of God, by faith. Theſe two images cannot ſtand together, no more than Dagon and the ark. Dagon muſt fall, if the ark come into the heart.

Pectora noſtra duas non admittentia curas.

Again, let a man have an imaginary idea of Chriſt's human nature, now exalted to heaven, and ſitting at the right hand of God, and on the throne of God; he forms the idea of a man, and the idea of a throne on which he ſits. I would aſk, whether the idea he hath of a man, be any better than the idea he hath of a throne; or if any of theſe ideas give the leaſt help or aſſiſtance to his faith; or rather, if they do not cloud his mind, and contribute to make him have a groſs, carnal, and unworthy notion of Chriſt? Can he in that glaſs ſee any thing of the inviſible glory of God in Chriſt, as the image of the inviſible God?

Peter Martyr, loc. com. p. 155, ſpeaking of images of Chriſt, ſays, "If the bodily preſence of Chriſt was a hinderance to the apoſtles, and the ſight of his human nature an impediment, unfitting them for receiving the Spirit, till once he went away in that reſpect from them, John xvi 7. how much more will images of Chriſt prove impediments?

We have no other glaſs to ſee Chriſt in, but the goſpel; no other eye to ſee him ſavingly by, but faith. If the eye of fleſh and imagination come between, there is no ſeeing of Chriſt by faith, till that eye of ſenſe be ſhut.

Again, to conceive of Chriſt as man, is carnal worſhip and idolatry, when this imaginary idea of him as man is brought in, as helpful and neceſſary to faith or worſhip. Which two I mention together, becauſe faith is a ſpecial leading part of divine worſhip. Dr Ridgley, ſpeaking againſt images and

idolatry, (*Body of Divinity*, vol ii p 257) hath these words: "That whatever of Christ comes within the reach of the art of man, is only his human nature, which is not the object of divine adoration: and therefore this rather tends to debase, than to give us raised and becoming conceptions of him as such." Even so say I, whatever of Christ comes within the reach of any man's imaginary idea, is only his human body; or, at most, I shall suppose, his human nature; which yet is not the object of divine adoration or faith: And therefore, this rather tends to debase, than give us raised and becoming conceptions of him; and thus, instead of being helpful, it is hurtful to our faith and worship. In the above words of Dr. Ridgley, Mr Robe may find this truth asserted indeed *in terminis*, That the human nature of Christ, (as there spoke of,) is not the object of divine worship: And yet, if he should pretend to find a charge of blasphemy against the doctor, he would but wire himself more and more.

In a word, how idolatrous this ideal and imaginary doctrine is might be further evidenced from the opposite doctrine of the ancient fathers. Clemens Alexandrinus, strom 6. says, *Essentiam divinam colere in materia, est eam per confusum dedecorare*: That is, To worship the divine essence in any thing material or corporeal, is to disgrace it and deface it by sense. Even so I may say, to worship the person of our Immanuel God-man, in an imaginary idea of him as man, which can apprehend no more but what is corporeal, is to disgrace and deface that person by sense and fancy. Augustine also, epistle 119. speaking of the divine essence, says, *Nulla imago ejus colli debet, nisi illa quæ hoc est quod ipse*: That is, No image of God ought to be worshipped, but that which is what he is. Thus indeed Christ could not be lawfully worshipped, if he were not essentially what the Father is. But the human nature is not that which he is: and therefore his human nature cannot be lawfully worshipped, but in his divine person, which is what he is. And hence, that which is the object of an imaginary idea must be excluded from the object of faith and worship, otherwise we believe in and worship an image of our own brain which instead of being divine worship, is gross idolatry.

Again, this ideal doctrine is atheistical: For thus I may argue, so conceive of God as man is atheism. But to have an imaginary idea of Christ as man, is a conceiving of God as man: and therefore the imaginary idea of Christ as man is atheism. The first is evident, because to conceive of God as man, is to make him not God, but man in our minds. The second proposition is what I prove thus: To have an imaginary idea of Christ as man, is a conceiving of God as man; be-

cauſe it is a conceiving of the man Chriſt, who is God, not as the perſon God man, but as man: Which is a way of conceiving of him, that excludes both his Godhead and perſonality. But does not Mr. Robe again and again aſſert, That, together with the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, we muſt have an idea of him as God, and then as God man in one perſon? Yea, he doth: But therein he ſays palpable contradictions For the firſt of theſe aſſertions deſtroys the two following; which are not in common ſenſe reconcileable with it, as long as common ſenſe and chriſtian doctrine can aſſert for a truth, That the man Chriſt is God, and God man in one perſon; but that Chriſt as man is not God, nor a divine perſon. Therefore the concluſion is plain, that an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is in itſelf atheiſm; becauſe it is a conceiving of him, not by faith, but by fancy: Hence not as God-man in the light of the word, but as man in the light of natural imagination.

That an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, does in itſelf lead to groſs atheiſm, and is direct atheiſm, I prove further by the following argument: That which tends to divide, deſtroy, and annihilate the perſon of Chriſt as God man in one perſon, leads to, and implies direct atheiſm: But an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, tends to divide, deſtroy, and annihilate the perſon of Chriſt as God man in one perſon: Therefore, that imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, leads to, and implies direct atheiſm.—The major, or firſt propoſition in this argument, cannot well be denied; unleſs it be denied, that Chriſt, as God man is truly God, and the ſame one God eſſentiall, with the Father, and Holy Ghoſt, though perſonally diſtinct from them; and unleſs it be denied, that it is not atheiſm, to attempt the dividing, deſtroying, and annihilating of God; which I ſuppoſe none will deny Therefore it remains only that I prove the ſecond, or minor propoſition namely, That an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man tends to divide, deſtroy, and annihilate the perſon of Chriſt as God man in one perſon This I ſhall prove in the three ſeveral heads of dividing, deſtroying, and annihilating

(1.) An imaginary idea of Chriſt as man neceſſarily *divides* the perſon of Chriſt; becauſe it divides the ſoul from the body of Chriſt, and alſo the human nature from the divine That it divides the ſoul from the body of Chriſt, is plain from Mr Robe's own frequent conceſſion, That imaginary ideas can have only corporeal objects, but it cannot think of ſouls, or ſpiritual things. This requires ideas of another kind; without which we cannot think in a rational way of any man as he is a rational creature, nor have an idea of the whole human

ture. But, suppose an imaginary idea could reach the human nature of man, yea, though it had an intellectual idea to assist it; yet it would divide the human nature from the divine, or the manhood from the Godhead. Because Christ as man is not God: therefore, to conceive of Christ as man, cannot be to conceive of him as God. Indeed any other consideration of Christ is reconcileable with conceiving of him as God, and with the conceiving of his person. To conceive of him as the man Christ Jesus, or to conceive of him as the prophet priest and king of Zion, or by whatever other name or office, imports and includes a conceiving of the person God-man, thus named, and of such a function. But, to conceive of him as man is, to exclude the person, and exclude the thoughts of his being God; for as man he is not God, nor a person either. Thus the imaginary idea of Christ as man divides both his humanity and personality; that is, his body from his soul, and his nature from his person; and so leaves nothing of the true object of saving faith to the fore; nothing but the picture of a human body, an object of mere sense. Further, as it divides the humanity, and divides personality, so, of consequence, it divides the unity of the person; in so far as the conceiving of him as man, does not include the conceiving of him as God. The conceiving of him as man, cannot include, but must exclude the conceiving of him as God man in one person. Therefore,

(2) As it *divides*, so it *destroys* the consideration of Christ as God-man in one person: For here to divide, is to destroy. It destroys the object of faith altogether: For the human nature of Christ cannot be the object of faith, *when the true body* is divided from the reasonable soul; for it is not the human body, but the human nature of Christ as joined in one person with the divine, that is the object of faith. And *when the personality* is divided, that is, the human nature from the divine; and, consequently, the unity of these *two* natures in one person, the object of faith is destroyed. We may conceive by faith of the human nature of Christ as personally unite to the person of the Son of God But, to conceive of his human nature as such, is to conceive of it by itself. This may be thought metaphysically possible; but it is morally, and, I may say, almost physically impossible; because the human nature of Christ is not, nor ever was a human nature by itself; For it never had, nor hath any being by itself, otherwise it would be a human person: which is absurd, as I have shewed. Now, that which hath no natural being by itself, and hath no being but in the Son of God, cannot be conceived by *itself*, without destroying the very being of it by that con-ep-

tion. So that, to conceive of Chriſt as man, or of his human nature as ſuch, abſtractly, which is to conceive of his human nature by itſelf, ſo as not to include the conception of his divine nature and perſon, in which alone that nature exiſts, is to deſtroy the perſon of Chriſt as God man in one perſon: and ſo to deſtroy the object of faith. And, of conſequence,

(3.) This imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, tends to *annihilate* the perſon of Chriſt as God-man in one perſon; and does actually annihilate, or turn it to nothing, as far as that idea can. For as there can be no faith or conception of Chriſt's human nature where there is only the idea of a *human body*, nor any faith of his divine perſon where there is only an imaginary idea of him as man, or of his human nature, as ſuch, or by itſelf; ſo the imaginary conceit, dividing and deſtroying the humanity and perſonality, deſtroys and annihilates the unity of the divine and human nature in one perſon; and, conſequently annihilates the very being of the perſon of Chriſt: For, to deſtroy the unity thereof, is to deſtroy the being thereof, according to the known maxim, * *Eſſe & unum convertuntur*: that is to ſay, *Entity and unity are convertible terms*; or, which is the ſame, *To be and to be one is the ſame thing*. That which is not one thing can be nothing. *E. G.* (1.) The human nature of Chriſt is one, and cannot be divided into more natures, though it conſiſt of ſoul and body; yet neither is the body, as ſuch, the human nature, nor the ſoul, as ſuch, the human nature. To form an idea of Chriſt's human body, and call it an idea of his human nature, or of Chriſt as man, which Mr. Robe ſo frequently does, is to divide the nature, and make it not one; which is to annihilate it. (2.) The divine nature of Chriſt is one with that of the Father and the Holy Ghoſt. To conceive of any, or all the three perſons of the glorious Trinity, is not to conceive of three natures; for this were to divide the Deity, which is one, and cannot be divided, without the annihilation of it, or making it no Deity, no God. (3.) Chriſt's divine perſon is one. To conceive of two natures of Chriſt, is not to conceive of two perſons, but of one divine perſon, ſubſiſting in and of himſelf. But, to conceive of Chriſt as man, which is the conceiving of him not as God, or to conceive of his human nature as ſuch, abſtractly, which is to conceive of it by itſelf, though yet it have no being or exiſtence in and of itſelf; this is the ſame with conceiving of it as a perſon, which is to deſtroy the unity, and ſo to

* De Vries determ ontol. p. 16 *Eſſe & unum reciprocantur. Eſſe autem quodvis ens, qua tale, unum nullo negotio demonſtratur. Puta, ſi ens non ſit unum, erit utique plura: atqui ſic divi ſum erit; conſequenter non jam amplius ens, ſed entia.*

annihilate the being of the perſon of Chriſt. Thus an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, does, in effect, turn that which is being itſelf, into no being and him that is all, into nothing. It is big bellied with a monſter of atheiſm.

An imaginary idea, according to Mr Robe's own confeſſion, can have nothing but what is corporeal for its object; and therefore nothing that is ſpiritual or divine. An imaginary idea then of Chriſt as man, can have no reſpect either to the divine nature of Chriſt, or the divine perſon of Chriſt, or the divine myſtery of the union between the divine and the human nature; for none of theſe are corporeal objects. Why then, the imaginary idea muſt, according to Mr. Robe, be converſant only about Chriſt's corporeal humanity, if I may ſpeak ſo; which yet it cannot be, without making that humanity like the imaginary idea itſelf, an imaginary nothing. This I prove further by an induction of particulars.

An imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, or of Chriſt's humanity, muſt have for its object one or all of theſe four: either a human ſoul, or a human body, or a human perſon in the concrete, or a human nature in the abſtract. But none of theſe can be the object of an imaginary idea, without turning Chriſt's humanity to nothing.

(1) The object of it cannot be the human ſoul of Chriſt; For, as his human ſoul is not his whole human nature, ſo the ſoul, being a ſpirit, cannot be the the object of an imaginary idea; which, as Mr Robe owns, hath no ſpiritual things for its object, but only corporeal.

(2) The object of it muſt be, and yet cannot be the human body of Chriſt by itſelf, without deſtroying the very notion of the human nature; for human nature conſiſts in the vital union of ſoul and body. Neither ſoul nor body makes up human nature unleſs they be unite. And even this union of ſoul and body, or any relation whatſoever, can by no means fall within the compaſs of any mere imaginary idea; but are objects of underſtanding.

(3.) The object of it cannot be a human perſon, without deſtroying both the humanity and the perſonality of Chriſt. For the humanity of Chriſt does not ſubſiſt but in his divine perſon; and his human nature cannot be imagined to be a human perſon, without ſuppoſing, as I ſaid, he hath two perſons, a divine and a human as well as two natures: which all ſound chriſtians in the world own to be a groſs error. Therefore,

(4.) The object of it muſt be, and yet cannot be human nature in the abſtract; For, to think of a human nature without *a ſubject, or perſon* in which it exiſts, is inconſiſtent with the *nature of things*; for human nature hath no real being in the

abſtract: And ſo to think of it thus, is to think of that which is not. And therefore, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, can come to no other iſſue, but an imaginary nothing.

But to give Mr Robe all the juſtice I can, it will be ſaid, I conſider the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man by itſelf ſeparately; whereas Mr Robe conſiders it as jointly with the idea of Chriſt as God, and as God man in one perſon. I confeſs, I do conſider the object of the imaginary idea ſeparate from the object of faith. And I muſt do ſo, becauſe faith and fancy are diſtinct things; yea, oppoſites, that will not incorporate or mix together, without deſtroying one another. Hence when Mr Robe aſſerts, That this imaginary idea of Chriſt as as man is neceſſary to the believing that he is God man in one perſon, it appears by the above argument that the amount of this aſſertion is, That we cannot believe in Chriſt as God and man in one perſon, without imagining that he is nothing at all; becauſe the imaginary idea of him as man, or of his humanity, muſt conceive of him either as a human ſoul, or a human body, or a human perſon, or a human nature in the abſtract: Which yet, as I have proven, cannot be the object of any imaginary idea, without turning that object, the humanity of Chriſt, into the image of that act, whereof it is the object; that is, to nothing at all, but an imaginary act upon an imaginary object; which is an imaginary ſhadow, an imaginary nothing. Now to make this eſſential to faith, ſo as none can believe in Chriſt as God-man without it, I want words to tell what horrible divinity it is; and how much it ſeems to be a diſcredit to reaſon itſelf as well as religion, a diſhonour to Chriſt, and diſgrace to chriſtianity.

CHAP. IV.

I COME next, as I propoſed, to ſhew the abſurdity of that principle That an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is helpful to the faith of his being God-man; and alſo to ſhew, that no imaginary idea of any corporeal object can give any help, either to the divine or human faith of any truth or propoſition relating to that object. This, one would think, is obvious enough to any that will but endeavour to exerciſe the reaſon that God hath given them. Mr. Robe aſſerts, That it is neceſſary to a right conception of Chriſt as God-man, to have an imaginary idea of him as man. His argument, I think, may be reduced to this form: If we cannot believe that Chriſt is God man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, then an *imaginary idea of him* as man is neceſſary to the believing

that he is God-man. But ſo it is, that we cannot believe that he is God man, without an imaginary idea of him as man: Therefore, &c.—I anſwer, (1.) By denying the ſequel of the major, or firſt propoſition: For, though it ſhould be granted, that we cannot believe in him as God-man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, yet it will not follow, that therefore that imaginary idea is neceſſary to the believing that he is God man; becauſe that imaginary idea is not neceſſary to faith, or to the act of believing, but only neceſſarily in the man that doth believe, in ſo far as he is a man that hath fleſh, as well as ſpirit, not as he is a believer, but a man endued with an imaginative faculty, by which he hath the notion of a man, a human body: Which imaginative faculty is not at all the faculty or power by which he believes; for he believes by a ſpiritually enlightened underſtanding, carrying the will along with it, towards Chriſt. But, though the ſaid imaginative faculty attends ſome way neceſſarily with the perſon believing, who is the ſubject in which that faculty naturally reſides; yet that imaginative faculty, and its exerciſe repreſenting the image of a man, is no more concerned in the act itſelf of believing, than it is able to apprehend the object of faith, namely, the glorious perſon of the God man. Hence, (2.) There is a manifeſt fallacy in the argument, namely, what is called by logicians, *fallacia a dicto ſecundum quid*. It is true as ſpoken of the imaginative faculty, that relates to what is corporeal, or to the object of ſenſe; but not as ſpoken of the believing faculty, that relates to a ſpiritual conſideration of Chriſt's humanity, and as it is the object of faith. The ſenſitive faculty acts towards what is ſenſible, or the corporeal faculty by an idea of what is corporeal; for the natural faculties and powers act in their natural way. But theſe are diſtinct things in all reſpects, from the ſupernatural faculty and power of believing, which is exerciſed about the ſupernatural object of faith. Mr. Robe's argument then confounds theſe things that are in themſelves every way diſtinct, namely, faith and fancy, yea, faith and carnal ſenſe. For, to ſpeak of a ſpiritual imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, would be contradictory to common ſenſe, and Mr. Robe's own deſcriptions of the objects of imaginary ideas, their being only corporeal things: Which being carnal things, and not ſpiritual, his argument neceſſarily confounds divine faith with carnal ſenſe and carnal imagination.

To make any thing that is ſimply corporeal the object of faith, is to deſtroy the very nature of faith: For, as the learned Ravenal ſays, *Theſaurus ſcripturæ, vol.* 1. *p.* 995. *Quod ea ſit*

fidei natura, ut etiam res inviſibiles, *&, judicio humano, impoſſibiles,* apprehendat, Rom iv. 18. Heb. xi. 1. *Adde quoque,* 2. Cor. iv. 18. *unde dicitur, Quod per fidem ambulemus, non per aſpectum; quia fides facit, ut apprehendamus res inviſibiles quarum aſpectu nondum potimur.* *That it is the nature of faith to apprehend things inviſible, and, to human judgment, impoſſible,* Rom. iv. 18. Heb. xi. 1. 2 Cor. iv. 18. *Hence it is ſaid,* We walk by faith, not by ſight; *becauſe faith makes us apprehend things inviſible, whereof we do not as yet enjoy the ſight.*

That which is ſimply corporeal is the object of ſenſe, and not of faith. The imaginary idea, having for its object only what is ſimply and merely corporeal, comprehends no part of the object of faith. Add, that to be ſimply corporeal, is to be ſo in itſelf; But that part of the human nature of Chriſt which is corporeal, was never merely or ſimply ſo in itſelf, any more than the whole human nature of Chriſt, which was never human nature in itſelf. And therefore that corporeal thing which the imaginary idea apprehends, being ſimply corporeal in itſelf, was never any part of the human nature of Chriſt; and therefore never any part of the object of faith, which conceives of Chriſt's human nature as having no exiſtence in itſelf, nor as ſubſiſting any other way, but in the perſon of the Son of God. Which myſterious humanity tranſcends the intellectual ideas of all the rational world, much more the ſenſitive imaginary idea of mankind; and can only be conceived by ſpiritual ſupernatural light and ſaving faith, grounded upon goſpel revelation. An imaginary idea, therefore, applied to this ſubject, is a mere chimerical principle, of which nothing can be underſtood but the name; or a ſound of words, which the authors thereof may uſe, as an altar of refuge for their own ignorance. Whatever their deſign may be, they may ſay of their image of Chriſt formed in the brain by an imaginary idea, as Aaron ſaid of the idol, *I caſt the gold into the fire, and there came out this calf.* They bring forth an image of Chriſt in the brain, that diverts the mind from the true Chriſt, and from the true ſpiritual object of faith ſet before us in the goſpel; where alone, *beholding as in a glaſs his glory, we are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,* 2 Cor. iii. 18.

A true believer hath a threefold life, animal, rational, and ſupernatural. Imaginary ideas belong to the firſt, intellectual ideas to the ſecond, and faith of God's operation to the third. How ridiculous is it to bring in with the laſt of theſe what belongs to the firſt? One would think it very childiſh and ridiculous, to ſay, none can believe that Chriſt is God man,

having a true and a reaſonable ſoul, without an intellectual idea of a human ſoul; much more to ſay, none can believe it, without the imaginary idea of a human body. Though both theſe natural powers be exerted, they come not near to the divine and ſupernatural power of faith; which acts in another ſphere, and, as it were, in the third heavens, far above both the former. Shall faith in its act or object be conſidered by that which relates to the loweſt ſphere wherein men move, becauſe the ſubject of inheſion wherein that faith is wrought, hath an animal life while in time? Is it like the ſpeech of a rational man, or of a fool, to ſay, ſo frequently, and ſo ſolemnly, that a man cannot poſſibly believe in Chriſt, without having an animal life, or ſenſitive faculties? It were more agreeable to the common notion of a rational world, to ſay, none can believe in Chriſt unleſs he has reaſon and reflection, ſuch as men have, than to ſay, he cannot believe in Chriſt unleſs he have animal powers and ſenſation, wherein brute beaſts have ſuch a great ſhare with us, though they are deſtitute of reaſon. How ridiculous would it be to ſay, no man can poſſibly move or work with his fingers, without moving the nails that are upon the points of them; nor walk from one place to another without drawing his heels after him? Why, it is very true, he cannot well ſhake off his nails when he works, nor lay aſide his heels when he walks, becauſe they are natural to the make of his body; yet it may be poſſible for him to work, and never touch his work with his nails; and alſo to walk, and yet never touch the ground with his heels. But, ſuppoſe he can neither work nor walk without them, how unreaſonable is it to deſcribe his working and walking by this limitation, or *ſine qua non*, that without nails and heels he can do neither? Much more unreaſonable is it to deſcribe the actings of that ſuperior and ſupernatural power of faith by this limitation, that they cannot take place without the company and concurrence of that inferior faculty of an imaginary or corporeal idea; which yet can by no means take up the inviſible object of faith, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in his perſon and glory. Chriſt's divine perſon is abſolutely inviſible to us, 1 Tim iv. 16 His glory alſo is inviſible; only faith can behold it in the goſpel glaſs where it is repreſented, 2 Cor iii. 18 But the darkneſs and ſuperſtition of the minds of men have brought in images to take the work of repreſenting Chriſt and his glory out of the hands of the goſpel; being able to make no affecting diſcovery of him in the word thro' their want of ſpiritual light, to make him the preſent object of their faith and love, as revealed and propoſed in the goſ-

pel. This was the true origin of all the imageries in the church of Rome, and other image worſhip Chriſt in his human nature being abſent, and their minds being dark, carnal, and prone to ſuperſtition as the minds of men are by nature, they would ſee nothing in the ſpiritual repreſentation of him in the goſpel, that did in any meaſure affect them: But in theſe images, as one ſays*, by the means of ſight and imagination, they found that which did really work upon their affections, and, as they thought, did excite them to the love of Chriſt Men not being able by the light of faith to diſcern the glory of things ſpiritual and inviſible, do make images of them to themſelves, as gods that may go before them: And theſe they are affected with; becauſe they can ſee and feel, and, in their own imagination, are ſenſibly excited unto devotion by them. But the worſhip of the church is ſpiritual, and the glory of it is inviſible to the eyes of fleſh; as both our Saviour and his apoſtles teſtify in the celebration of it: *We are come unto mount Zion*, &c. Heb. xii 22, 23, 24. The glory of this aſſembly does not appear to the ſenſe and imaginations of men. See much more to this purpoſe in the *Morning Exerciſes againſt Popery*, vol. v. p. 231.

We may view the whole ſtrength of Mr. Robe's logic relating to the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, its being helpful to the faith of his being God man, in the following example. I am told, that *ſuch a perſon is a good man*. Here, according to a logical diviſion, we have, (1.) The ſubject, namely, *a man*. (2.) The predicate, or what is told of him, namely, *goodneſs*. (3.) The *copula*, or copulation and conjunction of theſe two together, namely, that he is a *good man*. Now, to form a right thought that ſuch a man is a good man, I ſhall allow all theſe three, according to Mr. Robe's method, to be right. (1.) There is an imaginary idea we muſt have of that perſon as a man. (2.) An intellectual idea of goodneſs. (3.) A copulative or compounded idea compounding theſe two together. And ſo, by theſe three, we have a complete idea of him as a good man. And we cannot have the faith or belief of this, That he is a good man, without an imaginary idea of him as a man. Well, here is good enough natural logic, and this is the natural order wherein we conceive of natural things; though at the ſame time it is evident, the imaginary idea of the ſubject gives no help of itſelf to the intellectual idea of the predicate. Even though I cannot think of goodneſs, without thinking of a ſubject of inheſion in which it reſides, I muſt not dwell upon, or ſtand poring on the image

* *Morning Exerciſes againſt Popery*, vol. v. p. 223, 229, 231.

of the man; for the more I do ſo, the more I am hindered from the notion of goodneſs. The corporeal idea does not further, but hinder my underſtanding. Much more is it thus in ſpiritual things.

But this foreſaid logic Mr. Robe applies very abſurdly to the knowledge of God in Chriſt, or to the knowledge of Chriſt, and the faith of his being God man in one perſon; whi h not at all ſuits with any natural example of that ſort: For here it is not man that is the ſubject, but God, or the perſon of the Son of God. Though I am not here to diſpute the natural order of ideas that philoſophers ſpeak of, and their riſe and origin from ſenſation and reflection, but allow the firſt thing that preſents itſelf in the foreſaid example of a good man, is the ſubject of that predicate, namely, the idea of a man; yet I do not allow, that this order will hold in ſpiritual things, that are the object of ſaving faith; particularly in that which Mr. Robe ſpeaks of concerning Chriſt as man; where he makes the firſt thing pertaining to the knowledge of him to be an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man. This I deny; and would illuſtrate the contrary by the following plain propoſition. For example, this, *That Chriſt is man.* In this example, it is eaſy to ſee, that it is not in this, as in the former example of a good man, where man was the ſubject, and goodneſs the predicate; and therefore the man, in order of nature, was firſt in the imagination, and then goodneſs, as the thing aſſerted of him But in this example it is quite otherwiſe. Chriſt is the ſubject, and man is the predicate; that is to ſay, here is, (1.) The ſubject ſpoken of, namely, Chriſt; which is the name of a perſon. (2.) The predicate, or that which is ſaid of him, namely, that he is man Here then Mr. Robe's philoſophy will be found vain and idle, if not prophane and abſurd. For, to make the firſt thing here, in order to believe that Chriſt is man, an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, is to ſuppoſe that man is the ſubject, and Chriſt the predicate; which none that have common ſenſe will aver: And yet to ſet the predicate, man, before the ſubject, Chriſt, here would be both a ſetting the object of ſenſe before the object of faith, as he does, and an inverting his own order, and tranſgreſſing the common rule of natural philoſophy; which ſuppoſes indeed, that the ſubject or perſon is the firſt thing to be known, and then the predicate, or what is ſaid of the ſubject or perſon.

Thus, on the ſame head, when it is ſaid, the *Word was made fleſh*, or God was manifeſted in the fleſh, or in the human nature; *here it is* plain, the ſubject is God, or the Word; the *predicate is fleſh*, or the human nature. The firſt thing,

therefore, in the knowledge of this myſtery is not the imaginary idea of Chriſt as fleſh; for that is but the predicate, and cannot be known in relation to its ſubject, till the ſubject itſelf be known, namely, God; in whom, and no otherwiſe, that human nature of Chriſt does ſubſiſt: And conſequently, we can have no ſaving knowledge of Chriſt in his human nature, or as man, till we know him as God, and thus as God in Chriſt, God in our nature, not our nature in God, as if our nature were the firſt thing diſcernible in ſaving knowledge; but God in our nature; for our nature cannot be, nor be ſeen to be any part of the proper object of faith, till it be ſeen ſubſiſting in the perſon of the Son of God; which cannot be ſeen by any imaginary idea, but only by faith. Chriſt being the name of a perſon, to ſee the man Chriſt is to ſee the perſon of the Son of God, to be now God-man, or Immanuel God with us. When we ſee God, or his glory, in the face of Chriſt, it is the perſon of Chriſt; not in him as man, but as God-man in one perſon.

As God only is the proper object of faith and worſhip, and Chriſt as the eternal Son of God is ſo, as well as any other perſon in the adorable Trinity; ſo the perſon of Chriſt as Mediator, may be conſidered, either with reference to his divine nature, or his human nature; the human nature, being aſſumed, is not the natural or proper, but rather (if I may uſe this word) the adventitious object of faith and worſhip, namely, by reaſon of its conjunction or union with the perſon of the Son of God.

Now, the imaginary idea cannot ſee it in this conjunction; and therefore cannot ſee it as the object of faith, or of worſhip. What a man ſees of Chriſt only by his imaginary idea, is only corporeal; and therefore, not being God, it is not lawful for him to worſhip what he thus ſees: Nor is it lawful for him to make it the object of his faith, becauſe it is not God; it is only an image of a man formed in his brain: It is not the perſon of Chriſt, but the picture of Chriſt, in his human body that he ſees there. But, ſays Mr. Robe, Chriſt as God man cannot be conceived, without the imaginary idea of him as man. *Anſ.* Chriſt as God man is an inconceivable myſtery, which cannot be ſeen but by that faith which is *the evidence of things not ſeen.* An imaginary idea of any thing corporeal ſpoken of, is a thing that belongs to the imaginative faculty of the perſon that believes and of which he cannot be free while clothed with fleſh. But this imaginary idea of what is merely corporeal in Chriſt, belongs neither to the act nor the object of faith, nor to the means of it, as ſubſer-

vient thereto (1) Not to an *act* of faith; for faith is an act of the underſtanding, carrying the will with it; I mean of the underſtanding ſpiritualized, or ſpiritually enlightened. Nor, (2) does it belong to the *object* of faith: For no corporeal thing as ſuch is the object of faith, but of ſenſe The corporeity, or human body of Chriſt, can no more of itſelf, as it is the object of imagination, be the object of faith, than any other body can be ſo Nor, (3) Does it belong to *means* of faith, as any ways ſubſervient or helpful thereunto The corporeal faculties of ſenſe and imagination are indeed helpful to give me the notion of a body, or outſide of a man; but it cannot help me to know or believe any truth; no, not ſo much as this, That Adam was a man, or that he was the firſt man. Now, Mr. Robe's logic tells me to this purpoſe, I cannot believe that Adam was a man or that he was the firſt man, without an imaginary idea of him as a man; and that this idea is helpful to my believing him to be ſo. I anſwer, it is falſe: For though this imaginary idea helps me to form in my mind the image of a man, not the image of a houſe, or an horſe, but of a man; yet it cannot help me to know or believe any truth reported concerning that man. All the help the imaginary idea can give me to the knowledge and belief that Adam was a man, or the firſt man, is only to make me to conceive that Adam was neither a bird in the air, nor a beaſt of the field, nor a fiſh of the ſea; but a man, or ſuch a corporeal object which common ſenſe diſtinguiſhes from all other corporeal objects, by the name and deſignation of a man. This is all the imaginary idea helps unto. But can it help me or any perſon to know and believe this truth, which I have learned from tradition, or from the Bible, That Adam was a man, and the firſt man? Nay, the imaginary idea of him as man, the more I dwell upon it, the more doth it mar and hinder, and divert me from the knowledge and belief of this truth, That he was a man, and that he was the firſt man. Nay, if I had no more but the imaginary idea of him as a man, I would neither have the knowledge nor belief of this propoſition, That he was a man, nor that he was the firſt man. Truths and propoſitions are the objects of intellectual ideas; but cannot be the object of corporeal, ſenſitive, or imaginary ideas.

In conſequence of what hath been ſaid, let the truth or propoſition to be known or believed be this, That Chriſt the ſecond Adam, was a man Now, ſays Mr Robe, you cannot believe that Chriſt was a man, without an imaginary idea of him as man. And this idea is helpful and abſolutely neceſſa-

ry; becauſe you cannot know or believe in him as God-man, without the imaginary idea of him as man. *Anſ.* This philoſophy and logic is falſe and fallacious; as appears in this, That, though I cannot conceive him to be man, unleſs I had the idea of what a man is, or know the meaning of the word man, that it ſignifies neither a creature of the angelical nor brutal, but of the human kind; yet what ſays this to the believing of this truth, That he is man? That Chriſt the ſecond Adam is man, is a truth to be believed, and an object of faith; but the imaginary idea of him as man, makes him the object of ſenſe and fancy, and not of faith. It is a mental image, and picture of his human body in the brain, that ought neither to be worſhipped nor believed in: Nor can it be done without idolatry; becauſe we are forbid to worſhip God by any *image* of our making or forming. The true Chriſt, our Immanuel God-man, is the only image of the inviſible God, whom we are to adore, and by whom alone we are to believe in God, and worſhip him. But the image of Chriſt formed in the head by an imaginary idea of him as man, is not the true Chriſt, but a creature in the notion, a picture of his body in the brain; not ſo much as the object of an intellectual idea, but a ſenſitive; by the means whereof we cannot believe any truth whatſoever, human or divine.

See this in the moſt common things in the world. Let the aſſertion be, That *Simon the tanner had a houſe*. Why, ſays Mr. Robe's logic, you cannot believe this without the imaginary idea of a houſe *Solomon had a vineyard in Baalhamon*. Well, but you cannot believe this without the imaginary idea *of a* vineyard What childiſh work is this way of ſpeaking? Tho' all that the imaginary idea helps me to is to underſtand the meaning of the word houſe, and the word vineyard; that a houſe does not ſignify a horſe, nor a vineyard a river, but that a houſe and a vineyard ſignify thoſe things that the words repreſent to our mind: Yet none of theſe ideas contribute in the leaſt to my believing the truth of theſe aſſertions, That either Simon had a houſe, or Solomon a vineyard; for the belief thereof is no way founded upon the meaning of the words, or idea of the outward things, but upon the teſtimony of the aſſerter, &c. Thus, when in ſpiritual things we ſpeak of any truth, ſuch as, That Chriſt is man, the imaginary idea of him as man is only at beſt a help to know the meaning of the word man, or an image in the head of that corporeal object which we call a man: But this in itſelf hath no tendency to help or further the faith of this truth, That Chriſt is man. The belief of this is founded only upon the word of God, and

on the same testimony on which we believe that he is God, and God man in one person.

To think of Christ that he is man, is a profitable and necessary thought; because it can be thought of believingly, as a divine truth: But to think of him *qua* man, or as man, is a diverting the mind from the object of faith, to an object of sense, and a vain, idle, and unprofitable attempt to *know Christ after the flesh*, or carnally, by a sensitive idea, not spiritually, by faith. But now, to say, we cannot know him spiritually by faith, without that sensitive idea, is all one as to say, we cannot *know him after the spirit*, without *knowing him after the flesh*. Well, what though this be a sad truth, yet these two ways of knowing him are as opposite as flesh and spirit, sin and duty. But to make the sinful and natural way of knowing him necessary to the dutiful and spiritual way, or the imaginary way necessary to the real, is vain philosophy, and abominable divinity.

When one thinks rightly of Christ as man, he thinks believingly. To think believingly, is to think according to the word of revelation, that he hath a true body and a reasonable soul. To believe this, is not to have the imaginary idea of it, as if it were a corporeal object of sense, but to credit it as it is a divine truth, as much, and upon the same ground, as I believe that he is God; for both are believed upon the same testimony. Though it be corporeal; yet, as corporeal, it is not the object of faith, but of sense: But, as the object of faith, it is in the word, not in the head or the brain.

If Mr. Robe had said, we cannot believe Christ to be God-man, without believing him to be man, I would agree with that; for I make the human nature of Christ, as represented in the word, the object of faith. But, when he says, we cannot believe him to be God-man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, and that this is a necessary help to faith; this is what I reject, as a mixing of faith and sense, and a making, not divine revelation, but human sensation, a ground and means of faith. I reject it as a doctrine *that causes to err from the words of knowledge*, Prov. xix 27 a doctrine that leads to imaginary faith and worship, and to a fostering in the minds of people that mental idolatry, which may open the door to gross outward idolatry. To believe that Christ is man is to believe that this glorious person Christ, is clothed with our human nature, or, that he hath assumed our nature into his own personality. And thus to believe that Christ is man, is one of the most necessary articles of the christian faith, without which there is no believing unto salvation. But to con-

ceive of Chriſt as man by an imaginary idea, the object whereof is not at all Chriſt, but a mere human or corporeal ſubſtance; this imaginary conception joined in with faith, is a confounding of faith and fancy; a blending together things as oppoſite as fleſh and ſpirit, nature and grace; which, tho' they be both reſiding in the ſame ſubject, namely, the believer, yet are as oppoſite as faith and unbelief. The imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is a fleſhly conſideration, flowing from nature, and moſt unprofitable and unhelpful to faith. But the faith of this truth, That Chriſt is man, includes a ſpiritual conſideration of him, flowing from grace in the heart. Both theſe conſiderations may be in the ſame ſubject, and, perhaps too, much about the ſame time; but they are direct oppoſites, as much as ſpiritual light and ſpiritual darkneſs; which they that attempt to mix, are for mixing heaven and hell together.

Senſitive ideas can no more of themſelves help to produce intellectual ones, than bodies can help to produce ſpirits; nor mere ſenſe to produce reaſon, nor the animal to produce the rational life. And again, ſenſe and reaſon of themſelves can no more produce faith, than nature can produce grace; earth, heaven; or natural produce ſpiritual and ſupernatural life. But, if one ſhall ſay, in behalf of Mr Robe, that without ſenſe a man cannot have reaſon; and, without ſenſe and reaſon, he cannot have faith; therefore the one is helpful to the other: This will eaſily be granted in one reſpect, but not in another. It is true in reſpect of the ſubjects that are acted upon, but not in reſpect of the activity of the ſubjects. Senſe, reaſon, and the light of nature, are the paſſive qualifications of the ſubject of faith; becauſe there cannot be faith in a ſtone, or in a beaſt, no more than there can be ſin in them: Therefore ſenſe and reaſon make a man in a paſſive capacity fit for grace, tho' he have no active ability for it. In this reſpect, a thing may be ſaid to be neceſſary in a natural or phyſical ſenſe, or paſſively and ſubjectively; but this no way belongs to what is neceſſary and helpful in a moral or theological ſenſe, or in any ſenſe that is within the ſphere of activity proper to it. Senſe and reaſon act in their own different ſpheres, but faith in a ſuperior orb, not at all ruled or aſſiſted by natural reaſon itſelf: Which yet is highly uſeful many ways, in ſo far as it is firſt enlightened by revelation or ruled and aſſiſted by the divine word and a divine faith. Senſe and natural reaſon then are no otherwiſe neceſſary to faith than this, that the ſubject of faith be a rational creature, a man, and not a ſtone. And to ſay that this is an abſolutely neceſſary help to faith, is juſt to anſwer a grave queſtion in divinity with

a poor quirk of logic; and a blending together thoſe thi
that are quite different. For example: If I ſhould a
queſtion relating to the art of architecture, what is neceſ
to the artful building of a fine houſe? and the anſwe
ſtones or brick are abſolutel neceſſary, becauſe without ſto
or bri k he cannot build a fine houſe; the anſwer migh
reckoned very ridiculous, however true, becauſe it is no
porpoſe, and relates only to the materials of the build
but not at all to the art of it. Even ſo much and more o
the way is it to aſſert, that there is no believing in Chri
God-man, without an imaginary idea of him as man. It
blending of things quite different, yea, and directly oppo
ſo far as ſenſe is oppoſite to faith, and nature to gra e.

I am perſuaded, many exerciſed ſouls find to be their ſin
very thing which Mr Robe repreſents as a duty neceſſar
a right thinking of Chriſt as God-man in one perſon, nam
that they have an imaginary idea of him as man. It
them many heavy thoughts and fears, leſt they be wor
ping but an image of their own framing, an idol and re
ſentation of a man formed in their mind by their own i
gination, inſtead of the true God in Chriſt, or God in our
ture. This is matter of exerciſe to them, that, their r
being naturally carnal, they are ſo ready to have carnal v
of this ſpiritual object of faith. No doubt the carnal con
tions of Chriſt as man, that through the fleſh are unavoid
and involuntary, the Lord will pardon in his own, who ſt
through his grace, to act ſpiritually and believingly.
to preach up the neceſſity of that which all the true ſaint
God will find to be their plague, is one of the dreadful eff
of the deluſion of the day we live in.

An imaginary idea hath no more knowledge in it, than
ſcripture aſcribes to an ox that knows his owner, or a
that knows his maſter's crib, Iſa i. 3. It is no part of
tional knowledge: I ſay again, that the imaginary ide
Chriſt as man is no part, no branch itſelf, of rational kn
ledge; far leſs of revealed religion. It belongs not to
rational, but the bruiſh part of a man. No man guide
reaſon and judgment, far leſs by the Spirit of God, c
bring in this as any help to, or any part of religion; w
belongs not to the knowledge that is in rational creat
as ſuch, but rather to the knowledge brute beaſts have
equal ſhare of with men, 2 Pet ii. 12. where ſome men
compared to *natural brute beaſts*. And, Jude, verſe 10.
ſaid that ſome *ſpeak evil of the things which they know not:
what they know naturally as brute beaſts; in thoſe things they*

rupt themſelves. Where we ſee that brute beaſts have a natural knowledge, that is, without reaſon and judgment. Such a knowledge is an imaginary idea of any corporeal thing. This is a knowledge that all men have, in ſo far as they have but the ſenſitive life of brutes. None can ſpeak of a bird in the air, a beaſt in the field, or fiſh in the ſea, or whatever elſe, but preſently the imaginary idea or image of that bodily thing ſpoke of, will be formed in the brain: whether it be abſent, if it be but ſpoke of into the ear, or preſent to the eye, the image of it is in the head And ſo far even a brute beaſt. A dog, though he hath not the underſtanding of words, yet hath an imaginary idea of his maſter, whether preſent or abſent. If he be preſent, he ſhews it by fawning upon him, or waiting his motions; if abſent, by ſeeking after him, and diſtinguiſhing between him and thouſands of other men in a crowd. The imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, an abſent man, this idea having no other object but what is corporeal, how far it differs from the natural knowledge of a brute beaſt, may be eaſily conſidered. The great difference lies in the ſubject; but neither in the act, nor object, nor faculty acting upon it. The act is the imaginary idea, which brutes may have; the object is a man as he is a corporeal thing, which alſo the brute hath an idea of; the faculty is the ſenſitive corporeal power, which the brute beaſts alſo have: Only the ſubject or agent here is a rational creature, not acting rationally, like himſelf, by the right uſe of natural reaſon. But, while he hath no more than that imaginary idea acting, ſo as to confine his act within the narrow bounds of his natural ſenſation or imagination, he can know no more, but what he knows naturally as brute beaſts. And what things men know this way, *in thoſe things they corrupt themſelves*, ſays the apoſtle. Where, if he ſpeaks of ſenſual corruptions and brutiſh luſts, the argument holds the more ſtrongly with relation to mens corrupting and defiling their minds by carnal images or brutiſh imaginations of ſpiritual things; and that, in ſo far as filthineſs of the ſpirit is yet more abominable before God than that of the fleſh This brutiſh knowledge is particularly ſpoken of in ſcripture with reference to idolaters; and, being applied to groſs idolatry, is equally applicable to mental imagery, which is the ſecret chamber from which all outward images are brought: Jer. x 14, 15, 16. *Every man is brutiſh in his knowledge: Every founder is confounded by the graven image; for his molten image is falſhood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors; In the time of their viſitation they ſhall periſh. The portion of Jacob is not like them;*

for he is the former of all things, and Israel is the rod of his inheritance; the Lord of hosts is his name. It was said, verse 8. *They are altogether brutish and foolish: The stock is a doctrine of vanities.* And the same words are repeated, chap. li 17, 18, 19. Of this brutish knowledge also we read, Hos. xiii 2. where it is said, *they made them idols according to their own understanding*; that is, says *Henry*, "according to their own fancy. They consulted with themselves what shape they should make it in, and made it accordingly; *a god*, according to the *best of their judgment*. or, *according to their own likeness*, in the form of a man. And, when they made thier idols, men like themselves in *shape*, they made themselves stocks and stones like them in *reality*: For, *they that made them, are like unto them; and so is every one that trusteth in them*, Psal. cxv. 8." Idols and images are first the work of men's *heads*, and then the work of their *hands*. They are shaped first by their fancy, and then by their fingers; because what they know naturally as brute beasts, in these things, they corrupt themselves. All the Popish pictures of Christ are owing to this natural knowledge or imaginary idea of Christ as man.

Thus we may see what sort of knowledge Mr. Robe's ideal doctrine belongs to. The natural understanding of man, as man, is with reason and judgment; but what they know naturally without these, is no other than that of brute beasts, which have sense and imagination. And Mr. Robe himself distinguishes several times between those corporeal faculties that discern no more but corporeal things, and the faculty of understanding; consequently, his imaginary ideas are no other part of natural understanding, than that of brute beasts, without reason and judgment. It is true, in his letter he frequently confounds his imaginary ideas with knowledge, as if to know that Christ is man, and to have an imaginary idea of him as man, were alternatives, or one and the same thing But, as his explication of the objects of all his imaginary ideas, making them merely corporeal, will not quadrate with its being the same with the knowledge of any truth; so, if, notwithstanding this, he makes his knowledge and his imaginary idea the same, then either by his sensitive knowledge he means rational, or by rational he means sensitive; or else they are so blended by him, as to have no meaning at all, while reason is not employed to distinguish the one from the other.

Alas! his carnal and natural imagination of a corporeal object, which is called Christ as man does nothing but darken and abuse his understanding, and destroys all right thoughts and conceptions of Christ, till God in mercy blow away that *dark cloud*, and send forth his light and his truth.

An imaginary idea then relates to ſome other thing than either the rational knowledge, or the real faith and belief of Chriſt's being God man. It relates only to what is corporeal, and what may be ſeen or fancied; but to nothing intelligible or credible: for it is neither the object of faith nor of unbelief. It is neither a truth nor a falſhood in itſelf; But, as it is applied to the true Chriſt, it is a falſe and fictious repreſentation of him.

I ſhall further exemplify both the fallacy and folly of Mr. Robe's argument, from ſome homely ſimilies, ſhewing that no propoſition relating to any the moſt common truths, can be the object of an imaginary idea. For example; let one at a diſtance be told, that there is a man called Mr Robe that is miniſter in Killyth. Why, ſays Mr. Robe, he cannot believe this; nay, I defy him, and ſays it is impoſſible, (for in this manner he ſpeaks) to believe it without the imaginary idea of a man. Very true; and I ſhall add, he cannot do it, without the imaginary idea of a place called Kilſyth. Nay, beſides this, I ſhall add he muſt have an intellectual idea of a miniſter; for that is the name of an office which none can make an image of in his brain, unleſs he ſhould paint there the likeneſs of a man in a pulpit, with a Bible in his hand, and call that a miniſter. But the miniſterial office, as ſuch, requires intellectuals to form a right idea of it. But, though this ſhould be added to the former, let any man tell me, whether it be agreeable with good ſenſe to ſay, that none can believe that Mr. Robe is a man that is miniſter in Kilſyth, without the imaginary idea of a man and a place ſo deſigned? Or, ſuppoſe that ſhould be eaſily granted; yet what help does that imaginary idea give to his belief of that truth? ſince the truth of that propoſition muſt depend upon the teſtimony of him that informs this man at a diſtance anent it, and not upon his imaginary idea of a man and a place; for theſe are corporeal things, and viſible, that are the objects of ſenſe: But the truth of the propoſition, being an incorporeal thing, cannot be received by ſenſe, but by reaſon and judgment, convinced of it upon the credit and fidelity of the informer. Nay, I will ſay further, that the imaginary idea or mental image of a man cannot ſo much as help me to believe that Mr. Robe is a man. This I will prove by what follows. That he is a man, is a propoſition or aſſertion: And no imaginary idea can conceive a propoſition or aſſertion of any truth, unleſs that propoſition had a corporeal form: which if it had, would not be a thing to be believed, but a thing to be ſeen or fancied. That idea may conceive the matter of a propoſition,

to ſay, that Mr. Robe, without the idea of a worm, cannot believe this ſcriptural poſition, Pſalm xxii 6. *That Chriſt is a worm, and no man?* which is an abſtracting from the conſideration of his being man, and betaking himſelf to the ſenſitive or corporeal idea of a worm; for theſe are both true, That Chriſt as man is not God, and, That Chriſt as a worm is no man. Hence common ſenſe may infer, that, at this rate, we cannot believe that Chriſt is God-man without an imaginary idea, importing, that he is neither God nor man. It is little wonder when Mr Robe goes out of God's way in matters of faith, into the field of vain imaginations, that he involves himſelf in the mire of inextricable abſurdities.

While Mr. Robe ſays the imaginary idea helps one to believe, it ſhould be conſidered, things are not credible, becauſe they are imaginable; otherwiſe indeed the imagination would help to believe. But, though ſome things utterable are not credible, becauſe they are not imaginable, (as, if one ſhould ſpeak of a mountain without a valley, this, we may ſay, cannot be believed, becauſe it cannot be imagined); yet things are not therefore credible becauſe they are imaginable. For example, a golden mountain: Every man that can form an image of gold, and an image of a mountain, can alſo, whenever he hears of a golden mountain, form the image of it in his brain; yea, neceſſarily does ſo, upon hearing of it with attention Now, if one ſhall aſſert, that a hill near Kilſyth, commonly called, Take me down, is a golden mountain, only hid and covered with a little earth and graſs, Mr. Robe ſays he cannot believe this without the imaginary idea of a golden mountain. Well; but if this idea makes it credible, or helps him to believe it, then he may try his hand, by digging, in order to enrich himſelf. But to bring the ſimile yet nearer to his way of arguing: Will this idea of a mountain help him to believe it is a golden mountain; becauſe it is impoſſible for him to believe it is ſo, without the imaginary idea of a mountain? By no means can theſe help one another; becauſe the one being imaginable, does not make the other credible; and that in regard that things imaginable, as ſuch, are not within the ſame circle of knowledge with the ſame things as they are credible: They relate not to ideas of the ſame kind; but the one to the ideas of ſenſe or ſenſation, the other to theſe of reaſon, or intellection. Far leſs will it hold true, that the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, will help to believe that he is God man. For, as this is a matter of faith, both the manhood and Godhead are within the ſame circle of knowledge, grounded upon divine revelation, namely, ſpiritual rational knowledge. But to bring in an imaginary idea here, is to go

i.h, being the name of an office, cannot be the object of a poreal or imaginative idea. Now, what help to the belief this truth is the firſt of theſe ideas, namely, the imaginary a of a man? The more I dwell upon this idea of a man, further I am from the belief of this truth, That Paul was apoſtle; for that idea does not concern the truth at all, t merely the corporeal image of a man in the head: which more I continue to gaze at, the more am I detained from belief of this truth, That he was an apoſtle. The image no part of the object of that faith at all. Some ſay he was little man; and ſo they form the image of a little man. hatever man he was, little or big, is that any part of the ject of this faith, namely, my believing that he was an poſtle? But, ſays Mr Robe's argument, it is impoſſible for us to believe that the man Paul was an apoſtle, without the aginary idea of a man: Therefore this is abſolutely neceſſary to that faith; becauſe he was as ſurely a man as he was apoſtle. May not any perſon ſee what an idle ſtory this is; nd how it is a confounding the object of faith with the object of ſenſe and fancy; and a making that neceſſary to faith which has no relation to it, and is nothing but a ſolemn trifling? If any ſay, you cannot think of a heart of ſtone, without the imaginary idea of a ſtone; therefore that idea is ſuch an abſolutely neceſſary part of knowledge, that without it you can not know what a heart of ſtone is. Is not here a miſerable confounding the ſenſitive with the rational part of a man; yea, ſenſitive ideas with ſpiritual knowledge moſt abſurdly? A ſtone may give occaſion, but no help, to think of heart-obdaration or hardneſs; which is a ſpiritual plague of the heart, that cannot be known or ſeen but with a ſpiritual eye. The ſight or thought of the material hardneſs of a ſtone can give no proper help. Separate the ſenſitive from the rational part, there is no more knowledge in the former than ſome beaſts have, which know the difference between a man and a ſtone, as well as we can do, with all our mere ſenſitive powers. It is indeed impoſſible to believe that Chriſt is God-man, without having the faith of his human nature. But it is impoſſible to have the faith ſo much as of his being man, or of his human nature, while we have but an imaginary idea of him as man; which while it laſts we are under the neceſſity of ſuſpending the thoughts of his being God, and ſo of giving way to atheiſm. To ſay or ſuppoſe, that we cannot believe that Chriſt is God-man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, which is that moment an abſtracting from the conſideration of his being God, by turning to the ſenſitive idea of a human body, which is no man; is it not as good ſenſe for me

be as wise about the nature of spirits as he was at first. What though, while he thinks the soul and body are unite in one human nature, the sensitive idea relating to the body intrude itself into the company of the intellectual idea, that thinks upon a spirit, which consists of no corporeal thing, but merely of understanding, will, and the like spiritual things? Does the presence of the foresaid intruder, presenting the image of a body, give him any help or assistance in the knowledge of the nature of the soul, or the belief of its being? Nay, I trow that object of sense, or image by the sensitive idea, will rather tend to give him a wrong notion of that which is the proper object of the intellectual idea. Even so does the imaginary idea of Christ as man, intruding itself into the company of faith, instead of being helpful or profitable, tends only to give mishapen notions of the proper object of faith.

Again, to add no more to the number of examples, let one suppose for a truth, that there is a man in the moon. The first thing, according to Mr Robe's argument, that is absolutely necessary for believing this, is, that you have an imaginary idea of a man. Why so? Because it is impossible for you to believe that there is a man in the moon, without this idea. Very true: none can hear of a man any where, but it presently raises the idea of a man in his head. But will any person say, that this idea of a man in the moon will help me to believe that there is a man there? Or is this fanciful idea any part of the object of that belief? But, when this argument is applied to spiritual things, such solemn trifling in the matters of God is intolerable.

I am almost ashamed to be obliged so oft to repeat this childish and foolish manner of speech with application to such a great and grave subject, as that of believing in the Son of God, or believing in him as God man. Why? The idea of Christ as man, is so far from being absolutely necessary and helpful to the faith of this mysterious object, a God man, that it cannot in the least help me to believe, as I said before, that he is man: Nay, as it excludes necessarily the faith of his being God, because as man he is not God; so it includes both the faith of his being man; for this truth, That he is man, is a scripture truth, an object of faith, and so no object of any imaginary idea. Yea, this imaginary idea of Christ as man not only does not include the faith of this truth, That he is man, but excludes it also; in so far as sense and sight exclude faith and believing. For, when the figure of a man, or the figure of a cross, as Mr Robe speaks, is before the eyes of the mind, then it is no object of faith, but of sight. So that

the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, inſtead of helping to believe in him as God-man, will rather help to believe that he is neither God nor man, for it excludes the faith of both. But I muſt tell Mr. Robe, that it is impoſſible for any to believe ſavingly, that Chriſt is God-man, without having the faith of his human nature, as well as of his divine, in one perſon; becauſe the faith of that perſon, ſo clothed with our nature, includes both. Whereas it is impoſſible to have an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, without excluding, by that idea, the faith of his being either God or man; becauſe the image or dagon of ſenſe, as long as it ſtands, is directly oppoſite to the ark of faith.

Again, an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, whether it be conſidered ſubjectively or objectively, I mean in the view itſelf, by the fancy and imagination, or in the object viewed, a human creature, belongs not even to chriſtian morals, far leſs to chriſtian myſteries. It belongs neither to moral philoſophy, nor to chriſtian knowledge, nor practice, but merely to things natural and animal, as ſuch. Let me exemplify this in the firſt queſtion of our Catechiſm, *What is the chief end of man?* According to Mr. Robe, the firſt thing requiſite and neceſſary to the forming of man's chief end, is to have an imaginary idea of man*. Why? Becauſe it is impoſſible to know man's chief end without it. Very true: But here is ſuch a confounding and blending of things that are every way diſtinct, that any man of ſenſe would accuſe him of blockiſh ſtupidity, that would make this one of the means or helps for knowing what the chief end of man is; becauſe that imaginary idea of man belongs not at all to this ſubject. It belongs to phyſics, but not to ethics; that is, to naturals, but not to morals, to the mind, as it is converſant about bodily things, but not about ſpirituals. In a word, it belongs to ſenſe, not to faith; to nature, not to grace, or religion. It belongs not ſo much as even to natural religion but merely to natural ſenſation; yea, not to natural reflection, as it is a mere imaginary idea. And hence, though it is true, that none can know what is man's chief end without an imaginary idea of man; yet ſo extraneous is this to that point of knowledge, that, inſtead of being helpful to it, I appeal to all mankind that have the uſe of natural reaſon, if an imaginary idea of a man, ſo far as it is pored upon, would not be a manifeſt impediment and hinderance to the knowledge of this point in divinity, relating to man's chief end?

Likewiſe Mr. Robe making this the firſt thing that belongs

* To ſpeak in Mr. Robe's language; for I own, man, or mankind being an *univerſal term*, cannot be the object of that idea.

to the knowledge of Christ, or to a right thinking of him; namely, to have an imaginary idea of him as man; it is a beginning to think of him, by denying that he is God; because, seeing as man he is not God, to maintain that this is the first thing that belongs to the right knowledge and thought of him, is to maintain that we ought to think of him in a way wherein he is not God, or to conceive of him in a sense wherein he is neither a God, nor a person, nor a subject wherein that which we think of, does exist. The subject wherein that humanity exists, being his divine person, which cannot be the object of any imaginary idea; to begin therefore to think of Christ by an imaginary idea of him as man, is to begin with atheism, or with a thought that necessarily excludes his Deity, and cannot include it; because Christ as man cannot be God. Therefore, as long as he uses that first help, namely, an imaginary idea of him as man, he brings himself under a necessity of denying that he is God, as the first means of believing that he is God: as if the imagination of his being man, were the first medium of believing him to be God. If the grand enemy that goes about seeking whom he may devour, had been plotting, ever since Christ's incarnation, to rob an affront upon him, he never fell upon a better method to deface the Deity of our Immanuel, than by using this stratagem of the absolute necessity, in the first place, of having an imaginary idea of Christ as man, without which they cannot believe that he is God or God man. For, if the devil gets them once to begin their knowledge of Christ with a strong imagination about his manhood, he will endeavour to fix and fortify that imagination; which, according to the nature of things, cannot include, but necessarily excludes the believing consideration of his Godhead. Thus, in a new way, never declared so barefacedly as now, *the god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. The god of this world blinds the minds of men with imaginary ideas about the corporeal things of this world many ways; but by no way more dangerous and deceitful than this of representing Christ, our glorious God-man Redeemer, the mysterious object of faith, as a corporeal object of sense, made present to the fancy, under the figure, or by the image of a man, instead of beholding him as the image of God; or making this image of a man necessary to the beholding of him as the image of God. May the God who is light, send forth his light and his truth, and save all his people from such gross darkness, that tends to hide the glory of the gospel from the eyes of men: *For, if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*

Again, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, being made by Mr. Robe the firſt thing needful to the right knowledge of Chriſt, and a neceſſary mean and help to it, it is a plain inverting of God's method of teaching, and an overturning of the order of chriſtian doctrine and ſaving knowledge. What, ſyſtem of divinity can any man produce that ever made any part of divine chriſtian knowledge to begin with the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man? We have uſed our Shorter Catechiſm as a moſt excellent and compendious ſyſtem, for the teaching of people the fundamental principles of religion; and it is remarkable there, that, as we are taught firſt the knowledge of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, one God, and of our ſinful miſerable ſtate, by our departure from him, before ever we hear of Chriſt; ſo, when Chriſt the Redeemer is deſcribed, he is ſet forth firſt in his perſon, under the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the eternal Son of God; who, being ſo, became man, and ſo was, and continueth to be, God and man in two diſtinct natures and one perſon for ever. This account begins and ends with the perſon of Chriſt; there is no word of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man; far leſs any idea of his manhood being the firſt thing requiſite to the knowledge of this glorious divine perſon, who, by an inconceivable myſtery, aſſumed our human nature into his perſonality, who was from all eternity the ſecond perſon of the glorious Trinity, and whoſe human nature never ſubſiſted in any other perſon, and never exiſted, till aſſumed by him into that hypoſtatical union. Now, to make the imaginary idea of him as man the firſt thing neceſſary to the knowledge of this infinitely glorious perſon, the God-man, is, in my opinion, ſuch a ſubverſion of that due order and method of chriſtian knowledge, as makes that the beginning of it, which yet is neither the beginning nor the end. The perſon of Chriſt is, I may ſay, even in this ſenſe, both the firſt and the laſt, the beginning and the end of chriſtian knowledge. But the imaginary idea of him as man is neither; and cannot ſo much as help one to know that he is man, far leſs that he is God-man. Further,

How ſtrange is the doctrine that neceſſarily imports that the object of faith is ſo divided, that one part of it is the object of any man's fancy, and another the object properly of faith; yea, that that which is the object of fancy, is properly the object of faith? Chriſt's humanity, ſimply as ſuch, cannot be the object of faith, any other way than as it is either a revealed truth of God, or a perſon; or elſe it muſt be a created thing or matter. In the laſt ſenſe, it cannot be the object of

faith; otherwise a mere creature, a mere human bud, and foul, is a part of the object of faith; which is grofs The immediate object of faith is the word. Now, the human nature of Chriſt, abſtractly viewed, cannot be the object of faith otherwiſe than as it is a revealed truth, that he is man, and is clothed with our nature. And here it is not his humanity, that is the object of faith properly, but the word declaring this truth. It is not his humanity as repreſented in our idea, that is the object of faith, but his humanity as it is revealed in the word; which is the glaſs wherein alone faith ſees it. *Faith cometh by hearing* what God ſays, and ſo credits it, as a truth revealed in the word: But faith *cometh not by ſeeing* any form or figure of his humanity, repreſented to the fancy or imaginary idea. Faith believes it as it is a truth revealed in the word, not as it is a thing formed in the fancy, which muſt be hurtful, but cannot be helpful to faith. It is true, we cannot believe that whereof we have no knowledge or conception. But then, this ſpiritual conception ariſes not from the imaginary idea, but from ſpiritual illumination, or light ſhining on the word, and by the word, into the underſtanding, which is the firſt thing God works upon.

Saving faith, no doubt, imports, among other things, a believing the truth of the fact, that Chriſt did really become man, aſſume our nature, and therein died and roſe again in our room; and a believing this upon his own teſtimony, not merely upon the hiſtorical evidence of the thing, which is but an hiſtorical faith; but a believing it upon the divine teſtimony, which is a part of divine and ſaving faith, to which no natural idea of ours can contribute any help. That which is the object of that idea, cannot be the object of faith: Nor can that idea be the glaſs wherein I ſee any part of the object of faith; for God never gave it that honour, nor appointed it to be the mean of faith; it is no ordinance of God for helping us to faith. Take away the revelation of this truth, or the divine teſtimony about it, and you take away faith. There remains nothing indeed but an imaginary idea: For faith can have no footing but upon a truth to be believed, or a perſon to be believed in.

The proper and immediate object of faith is *verum*, a truth declared and made known. The goſpel hence is called a *record*, a *report*, a *ſaying* a *faithful ſaying*. It is true, it contains a *good* alſo, worthy of all acceptation; and ſo *bonum* may be alſo reckoned the object of faith; but not ſo properly, unleſs it be conſidered as *bonum obiatum*, or a good offered and exhibited; and only as it is revealed in the word, as it is the

object of faith. The *summum bonum* itself, the chief good, which is God himself, cannot properly be the object of faith, but as he is revealed, or reveals himself. We believe his being and perfections upon his own testimony. Thus we cannot receive Christ, nor rest upon him for salvation, nor make him the object of our faith, but as he is revealed and offered in the gospel. Take away this revelation, this offer, this word of grace or promise, and then there can be no receiving or resting upon Christ by faith, but only by mere imagination, and unprofitable fancy. Now, if the proper object of faith be a truth in the word, how can the imaginary idea of Christ's humanity be helpful to it? while that idea necessarily changes the place of that humanity from being a truth in the word, to a fancy or imagination of it in the head? For, as it is there, it can be no part of the object of faith. As it is a truth in the word, we, by faith, conceive of it believingly to be what it is. But as it is represented in the fancy or imagination, it is neither a truth to be believed, nor a person to be believed in. (1) It is not a truth to be believed; for now it is away out of the word, which is the object or ground of faith, and into the head, as the object of imagination; where faith hath no footing, nothing to build upon but a notion, a dream. Nor, (2) Is it a person to be believed in; being only an imaginary idea of his human nature, and not of his person. A truth to be believed, cannot lie in any man's fancy, but only in the word. A person to be believed in cannot lie in the idea of Christ's human nature; which never was a person. How then can that be any part of the object of faith, which is neither a truth for faith to believe, nor a person for faith to be believed in, according to the word of God? To trust then to a Christ as formed in the imagination, and seen by the help of an imaginary idea, is not faith, but fancy, and a deep delusion.

In a word, an imaginary idea of Christ as man, or in his human nature, (which Mr Robe so often repeats and owns, cannot include the person of Christ,) can be helpful to no purpose in the world, far less to faith; no more than the grasping at a shadow can help to take hold of a substance. For human nature in the abstract, without being considered in a person, cannot be the object of any idea whatsoever; because it is a nonentity, a thing that hath no being or existence, but in a person or persons. In any other human person but Christ, human nature is the same with the person. But the human nature of Christ not being his person, an imaginary idea of it is an idea of it in the abstract; which therefore is nothing

but a ſhadow, an image, a nothing. Mr. Robe, then, in attempting to find out hereſy and blaſphemy in my doctrine has plunged himſelf more deeply into an horrible pit of abominable idolatry, where he is found worſhipping a ſhadow, as the object of his faith. He knew very well that I made the human nature of Chriſt, when rightly underſtood, as ſubſiſting in the perſon of the Son of God, to be ſo much the object of faith, that I could not allow it to be the object of an imaginary idea, without defacing and debaſing it, and making it no more Chriſt's true humanity, but the vile picture of the leaſt part of it. It is no wonder that I cannot allow of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, however it obtrude itſelf, like a devil, upon my own imagination as well as Mr Robe's. For, as in divinity it is abſurd and monſtrous; ſo, in philoſophy, it is ſcarce agreeable with common ſenſe, even to ſpeak of an imaginary idea of a mere man, (as I have ſaid:) For, even according to Mr. Robe himſelf, it is impoſſible that a man as ſuch can be the object of an imaginary idea without an intellectual one; becauſe a man is not a mere body, but ſoul and body unite, conſtituting one perſon: Which relation and conjunction no philoſopher will allow that it can be conceived by any idea of mere ſenſation. But Mr. Robe will have, by his doctrine, the human nature of Chriſt to be the object of every or any man's imaginary idea, and yet as ſuch the object of faith alſo; yea, ſo eſſential to faith, as a help to it, that he that ventures to deny this muſt be charged with blaſphemy, as if he denied the human nature of Chriſt to be the object of faith in any other reſpect; becauſe he denies it to be the object of his imaginary idea. Such a mixture of impudence and ignorance can hardly be paralleled. But I deſire to ſpeak ſoberly: for what abſurdities will poor men run themſelves into, when God leaves them to themſelves, and gives them up to ſtrong deluſions? ſo ſtrong ſometimes, that thoſe who are under the power of them, will charge them all likewiſe with blaſphemy that venture to call them ſo.

CHAP. V.

I PROPOSED, in the *fifth* place, to offer particular remarks upon all the parts of Mr. Robe's letter relating to this ſubject, and in ſo far as he impugns the doctrine delivered in the above Appendix, and charges it with hereſy and blaſphemy.

Becauſe this chapter is long, I ſhall divide it into different ſections.

SECT. I.

Some philoſophers and divines have not ſo accurately diſtinguiſhed between imagination and underſtanding as was needful*. Mr. Robe, in his letter, plainly diſtinguiſhes them, p. 8. 10 and elſewhere, and yet as plainly confounds them. Almoſt in every page he makes his imagination or imaginary idea to have no other object but corporeal; and yet he makes the moſt ſpiritual things to be the objects of fancy and imagination, by citing philoſophers and divines, that either have been of Gaſſendus's mind, or at leaſt have not accurately conſidered the difference between imagination and underſtanding. And hence his citations do him little ſervice, unleſs it be to confirm him in his confuſion, wherein he makes faith and fancy ſo very ſib, as to be one and the ſame thing. Hence he brings in the learned Charnock, p. 20. when ſpeaking of the elements in the Lord's ſupper, ſaying, "Here we ſee the ſufferings of his body, &c. Here fancy may work about the inconceivable troubles of his ſoul, &c." It is ſcarcely to be thought that Mr. Robe and that author agree in their notion about the meaning of the word fancy; otherwiſe he expoſes that learned man by citing him in this manner. Why, Mr. Robe ſeems to make an imaginary idea and fancy to be the ſame thing, as indeed they are; and he is of the mind, that the imaginary idea cannot work upon ſpiritual and inconceivable things, whatever help or aſſiſtance he thinks the imagination can give to the underſtanding to do ſo, p. 24. yet theſe, he ſays, are not the object about which the imagination can be converſant; neither can it receive any ſpecies of them: And yet here he brings in the fancy working about the inconceivable troubles of Chriſt's ſoul, which can only be ſeen and apprehended by faith; and ſo ſeems to indentify and confound

* Imagination, according to the learned, is thus defined, namely, An application of the mind to the phantaſm or image of ſome corporeal thing impreſſed in the brain. Or, it is a power or faculty of the ſoul, by which it conceives and forms ideas of things by means of certain traces and impreſſions that had been before made in the brain by ſenſation. What we call fancy, they define by imagination, as being one and the ſame thing. The learned Charnock makes both ſenſe and fancy corporeal faculties, vol. i. p. 125, as cited in Mr. Robe's letter, p. 8. Again, underſtanding is thus defined, namely, A faculty of the reaſonable ſoul converſant about intelligible things, conſidered as intelligible. Some philoſophers ſeem to diſapprove the diſtinction betwixt imagination and underſtanding; as the followers of Epicurus, ſuch as Gaſſendus, *dubit. & inſtant in Cart. medit* 3. *p.* 181. *Dicito quid aliud intellectio quam idea perceptio ſit? Quid aliud imaginatio quam perceptio imaginis? Et, cum idea ſit imago, quid aliud ſit intellectio quam imaginatio?* and others.

faith and fancy: For there is more here than the fanc things corporeal, helping, as he elſewhere alledges, to faith of things ſpiritual; for here is the fancy of things are moſt ſpiritual and inconceivable, which only the fait believers, when diſcerning the Lord's body can apprehe Mr. Robe ſhould here have diſtinguiſhed between things aginable by a ſenſitive idea where imagination imports inw ſenſation of corporeal things, and things imaginable by an telle&tual idea, where imagination imports reflection and tional underſtanding of things incorporeal, or as intelligi But this is not properly or ordinarily called imaginati becauſe it agrees not with the nature of it as above defin Sure, fancy, and imagination, in Mr. Robe's ſenſe, cannc converſant about things inconceivable; ſince he plainly tinguiſhes his imaginary idea from an act of the underſtan in his letter, p 24, 51. &c and makes the object thereof things corporeal I know not indeed whether Mr Robe l a tincture of ubiquitarian principles, whereby he can conc of Chriſt's human body as preſent, as well as abſent, in ſacramental ſupper, or otherwiſe. But one would think word imports ſo much, when he ſays, p. 29 "We can often do think upon him, or have an imaginary idea of I as man, without thinking of him as preſent, or under conſideration." But if any think of Chriſt's human na with ſpiritual underſtanding, ſurely, while they view it, *itually* in the word, *ſymbolically* in the ſa rament, *repreſentat* both in word and ſacrament, and *perſonally* in the Λόγος. *Word that was made fleſh*, they cannot but conſider it now t *locally* in heaven; though they conſider him that is clo with it, to be *eſſentially* every where. But to conceiv Chriſt's human nature, or human body, as Mr. Robe ſpe without the conſideration of its abſence, ſeems either to vour ſome ubiquitarian maxim, or elſe ſome deluſive ima ation or fancy of Chriſt as bodily preſent.

Beſides what notice I took before of Mr. Robe's doctr and principles delivered, p. 30 and 31 of his letter, there ſome further remarks I would offer.

* Some philoſophers ſpeak of fancies, and diſtinguiſh them into ſen being received by the ſenſes; and others not ſenſible, as thoſe of inc real things. Some, ſay they, are rational, (called intelligence) as l peculiar to reaſonable creatures; others irrational, as in brutes. (H may ſome of Mr. Robe's authorities be ſuch as underſtand fancy an agination in a quite other ſenſe than he) They diſtinguiſh alſo bet fancies involuntarily, that ſtrike the mind of a ſudden with violenc by ſome terrifying news that diſturb the mind; and voluntarily, be a wiſe man examines theſe, and ſtrips them of their terrifying qual *Lives of Philoſophers, p (mihi)* 288.

To ſay, That we cannot believe in Chriſt, the God-man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, what, alas! does this mighty phraſe ſo oft repeated come to, when it is conſidered that the imaginary idea, even according to Mr. Robe, can go no further than the outward corporeal form, or the outſide of the human body? It is natural for all men, as long as they are in the body, whenever a man is ſpoke of, to have an image or form of a human body in the brain: But, alas! why ſhould this idea be ſpoke of with relation to the actings of precious faith on the Son of God? For this imaginary idea may be applied to any thing in all the world, near or diſtant, abſent or preſent, that is the ſubject of diſcourſe; if it be a corporeal thing, the ſame imaginary idea will be received or formed in the brain about it. None can hear tell of a houſe, and liſten to the report, without an imaginary idea of a houſe; nor hear and liſten to any thing ſaid of a bird in the air, or a fiſh in the ſea, or a horſe, dog, or any other creature on earth, without an imaginary idea forming the ſhapes or images of theſe creatures in the brain, as faſt as they can be told. This is a ſenſitive power and faculty given us, whereby we are able to underſtand the meaning of words, or what ſort of bodily things theſe words repreſent to our fancy. This is a power of ſenſation, whereof many inferior creatures of the brutal kind do largely partake, as well as mankind; ſo as to have images of outward things in their imagination, by the means of their outward ſenſes of ſeeing, hearing, or the like; and that even to greater perfection than in men, according to that known verſe:

> Nos aper auditu, lynx viſu, ſimia guſtu,
> Vultur odoratu nos vincit, aranea tactu.

Which may be thus Engliſhed:

> The wild boar's ear, the lynx's eye, the rav'nous vulture's ſmell,
> The ape's fine taſte, the ſpider's touch, our ſenſes all excel.

But now, to apply this to ſuch a ſpiritual ſubject as that of believing in the perſon of Chriſt, the glorious Immanuel, is unaccountably abſurd. Why, ſays Mr. Robe, p. 30. "I aſſerted, and do aſſert, That we cannot think upon Chriſt really as he is, God and man in two diſtinct natures, and one perſon for ever, without an imaginary idea of him as man, or in his human nature, conſiſting of a true body and a reaſonable ſoul." Where, beſides his making Chriſt's human ſoul the object of his imaginary idea though he aſſerted, that no ſpiritual thing, and nothing but what is corporeal, could poſſibly be the object of it; beſides this groſs abſurdity and ſelf-contradiction, let me ſuppoſe he means only the imaginary idea of Chriſt's hu-

man body; and he can mean no other thing if he be any way agreeable with himself; for an intellectual as well as an imaginary idea must concur in thinking upon a reasonable soul, as well as a true body: But let me suppose, I say, that he means this, namely, an imaginary idea of Christ's human body, when he speaks of the imaginary idea of him as man. Why then, the amount of it is this, that, seeing the sensitive faculty of forming ideas of all corporeal things spoken of, is natural to all men, while they have bodies unite to their souls; therefore no man can think of, or really believe in Christ as he is God and man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever; without having a body with some or all of the five senses, and a brain capable to form the image of a man or a human body, and without actually exerting this capacity and power of sensation and imagination, for forming the image of a man in the brain. This is the whole import of the matter: And yet this, says Mr. Robe, though he will not call it faith, yet it is absolutely necessary and greatly helpful to it. I own, such carnal, foolish, and vain stuff to me appear a scandal to the rational world, a disgrace to the glorious gospel, a discredit to our holy religion, and a master piece of contradiction to solid divinity

This imaginary idea of Christ as man, while Mr Robe says he does not call it faith meaning, I suppose, the act of faith; yet he must mean, that the object of that idea, viz. Christ's human body, is the object of faith, or at least a part of the real and proper object of it; otherwise his alledging it blasphemy to deny it to be the object of faith, would have had no foundation at all. But now it is self evident to any considerate man, that the human nature of Christ belongs not really, but only relatively, to the object of faith; even as there is no real change of the person of Christ by his assuming our nature, though there is a relative change Thus there is no change of the object of faith from the divine person of Christ to some other thing, as if now the human nature belonged really to, or were the proper object of faith; which indeed is blasphemy to imagine, as supposing a real change in God, who alone is the object of faith. If faith's object should relate to something that is corporeal; yet neither philosophy nor divinity will admit that it can be the object of faith as it is corporeal; but under some other consideration, namely, as that corporeal thing is held forth in some truth, assertion, or testimony about it, or under some credible and intelligible, or spiritual and invisible consideration Of which more afterwards. *Truth* to be believed is a spiritual and invisible *thing, whatever* be the subject-matter. I shall suppose, e. g.

it is the rock in the wilderneſs is the ſubject: This, as it is a material or corporeal thing, cannot be the object of faith; but only of ſenſe and imagination; but let it be ſpoke of under a word of truth or teſtimony, ſuch as that, 1 Cor. x. iv. *They drank of that ſpiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Chriſt.* Here is an object of faith. But then it is not the rock as it is the object of an imaginary idea, that is the object of faith but the teſtimony relating to that rock. Thus the human nature of Chriſt is not at all the object of faith in itſelf, or under that conſideration but only the object of ſenſe or fancy: But let a word of teſtimony relating to it be held forth, ſuch as for example, *That his human body was broken for us*; this truth, relating to that broken body, is the object of faith; but the broken body itſelf, as viewed by an imaginary *idea*, is an object of ſenſe, and can in no propriety of ſpeech be called the object of faith: For here ſenſe and imagination hath ſomething to ſee or form an image of But take away the truth relating to it, and faith hath nothing to believe at all: there is food for fancy, but none for faith.

But, though Mr. Robe, throughout his letter, would fain confound his imaginary idea with knowledge, as if to know Chriſt to be man, were the ſame with an imaginary idea, he will find himſelf miſtaken; for I ſhall prove they are quite different things. The imaginary idea belongs to the ſenſitive faculty, having for its object, according to Mr Robe himſelf, only corporeal things: but knowledge belongs to the intellectual faculty, that is capable of being converſant about ſpiritual things, ſuch as God and other ſpirits and truths; which no imaginary idea is capable of. For example, let this be the truth I inſtance, namely, *That Chriſt hath a true body, that he is really man.* This truth is an object of knowledge and faith: But it is not the object of an imaginary idea; for truth, as I ſaid above, hath no body, no corporeal parts, nothing viſible or ſenſible for an imaginary idea to fix upon. None can draw an image of it in his brain; for it is a ſpiritual thing, a part of the image of the inviſible God, a ray of light from him that dwells in light inacceſſible, to which no man can approach. Truth is a perfection of God; Chriſt is truth itſelf, and all the lines of particular truths revealed in ſcripture, meet in him as the centre of truth: And whether they be known and believed in a ſaving or common way, yet none of them as truths can be apprehended by any imaginary idea; becauſe truth is no corporeal thing But now the imaginary idea of a body cannot at all help me to believe this truth, That Chriſt had a body *prepared for him, Heb* x 5 or that he hath a true body. The *imaginary idea of it* is but the image of a body, that hath no

true or real exiſtence; but only in the fancy or in the brain: where it, being no true body, but an imaginary one, can never help or aſſiſt me to the belief of this truth, That *Chriſt hath a true body*. But, by ſpiritual knowledge and ſaving faith, we ſee Chriſt hath a true body. Where do we ſee it? *Anſ.* (1.) We ſee it where we ſee truth; that is, in the word of God, upon whoſe teſtimony we know and believe it, Jer. ii. 31. *O generation, know ye the word of the Lord.* Thus we ſee it where no imaginary idea can approach to it. But faith ſees it here as a precious truth, and ſometimes feels the ſweet ſmell of it, as one of the leaves of the Roſe of Sharon, which an imaginary idea can no more do, than a man can draw the picture of the ſweet ſmell of a roſe: *Qui pingit flores, non pingit floris odorem.* The picture of a roſe is no more a true roſe, than the picture of the human body of Chriſt, formed by an imaginary idea, is a true body. But, as faith ſees it where it ſees truth, ſo, (2.) It ſees it where it exiſts, that is, in the perſon of our Immanuel God-man; where alſo no imaginary idea can come near to ſee, but is infinitely remote from it. And indeed, if the human body of Chriſt ſeem to be ſeen any where elſe, than in the perſon of the Son of God, where it only exiſts, then it cannot be the true body of Chriſt that is ſeen, but a mere nonentity, a mere ſhadow. It is not conſiſtent with common ſenſe to ſuppoſe it can be ſeen where it is not, or ſeen where it never exiſted. Thus we know *the truth as it is in Jeſus*; and particularly we know and believe this truth, *That he hath a true body*, when we ſee it where we ſee truth, and when we ſee it where it exiſts: We ſee it *as the truth is in Jeſus*, Eph iv. 21. If therefore, when a believer hath his mind occupied about the knowledge and faith of this truth, *That Chriſt hath a true body*, an imaginary idea of that body ſhould obtrude itſelf, and form an image of that body in his brain, and ſo ſhewing it where it really is not, and where it does not exiſt, nor cannot be ſeen; he ought to deal with that imaginary idea as Abraham did, Gen. xv. 11. *When the fowls came down upon the carcaſes, he drove them away:* So ought believers to drive ſuch vain imaginations away, as they would do the devil himſelf tempting them, and diverting their minds from the faith of that truth, to an idle fancy about a human body. If he cannot rid himſelf of it as long as vain thoughts lodge within him, yet he ought daily to pray and plead with God, that he may be delivered from it; otherwiſe he cannot *attend upon the Lord without diſtraction*, 1 Cor. vii. 35. And indeed I am bold to ſay, that, to preach up an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, and aſſert it to be neceſſary and helpful to ſaving faith, is to preach up the neceſſity of diſtraction and deluſion, the neceſſity of

mental idolatry and imagery. Whereas nothing is more neceſſary and helpful to ſpiritual knowledge and ſaving faith, than to have all ſuch imaginary ideas baniſhed and buried out of ſight, that faith may act like itſelf, not by the means of natural and carnal ſenſation, but by the means of ſpiritual illumination; or by *the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt, and God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, his ſhining into the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.*

To have an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, however common to fleſhly nature, is not at all a thinking upon Chriſt; for Chriſt as man, in Mr. Robe's ſenſe, is not Chriſt at all, but a mere nothing. Some may think ſtrange of this way of ſpeaking, but I ſhall make it clear. Chriſt as man is not Chriſt at all; for as man, or in his human nature, he is not the ſubject wherein that manhood doth ſubſiſt. Again, Chriſt as man is not Chriſt, for as man he is not a perſon; but Chriſt is a perſon: As man he is not God; but Chriſt is God: As man he is not the *eternal Son of God;* but Chriſt is the eternal Son of God. To have an imaginary idea of the true Chriſt is impoſſible; becauſe Chriſt is God and man in one perſon. Therefore, to have an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, is eaſy to any man, but unprofitable. Whereas to think upon Chriſt believingly, is the moſt profitable thought. That Chriſt is man, is the object of faith: But Chriſt as man (in Mr. Robe's ſenſe) is not ſo; for, according to the import of the article *as* in our language, it ſerves for the limitation and reſtriction of the ſubject ſpoken of, ſo as to confine it to the ſenſe only of ſome property or predicate aſcribed to it. Thus, when we ſpeak of Chriſt as man, we reſtrict and confine the meaning of the word Chriſt, which ſignifies a perſon, to the meaning of the word man, which ſignifies only the human nature, and not the perſon: And thus the word man ſignifying only what we commonly underſtand by that word, it may be the object of any man's imaginary idea; but can never be the object of faith as long as man does not ſignify God. To think then of Chriſt as he is the Chriſt of God, is to think of that perſon who is both God and man, the only Saviour and Redeemer. But to have an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, is to confine the thought only to corporeal manhood, or to ſet up the image or picture only of a man in the head or brain; which is no more Chriſt than any other man is, as Mr. Robe's way of arguing proves. Yea, it hath leſs reſemblance to Chriſt, than the fancy we have of another man, whom we can truly think of as a perſon. But, when the idea of Chriſt as man repreſents to us a perſon, it repreſents a lie and a falſhood; becauſe, as I ſaid, Chriſt *as man is no perſon.*

SECT. II.

Mr Robe ſays, p. 21. "When we think upon the Lord Je Chriſt, as he is God and man in two diſtinct natures, we m conceive of him to be true and real man; and this is what called an imaginary idea of him." I ſuppoſe it were eaſy ſhew how this expreſſion proves the author of it to be qu ignorant of what he is ſaying, and neither to underſtand philoſophical terms in which he ſpeaks, nor the point divinity of which he ſpeaks.

(1) As to the philoſophical term of idea, and imagin idea, it is plain he cannot underſtand this: For, though aſſerts elſewhere, that the imaginary idea can reſpect other but corporeal things, yet here he makes it to reſp two ſpiritual and incorporeal things, as its objects. The is the human nature of Chriſt, as true and real man: wh he will own includes the human ſoul, as the chief part of man nature: Yet this, as well as Chriſt's human body, is h (in his way of wording the matter) ſuppoſed evidently to the object of an imaginary idea. The other is the divine p ſon of Chriſt, the God man; for he ſpeaks of the imagin idea of him: Which *him* is not common ſenſe, if it does ſignify a perſon. For had he meant only Chriſt's human ture, the proper language of one that underſtood what ſaid, would have been to ſpeak of the imaginary idea of which *it* would have ſhewed, that it was not a perſon, bu nature that was ſpoken of. But, to ſpeak of an imagin idea of *him* is unintelligible, unleſs he be ſpeaking of a perſ it is the perſon of Chriſt, who is God man in one perſ And, to appl[y] an imaginary idea to that infinitely glorious ject, which comprehends both a finite and infinite ſpirit, a yet that idea, even according to Mr. Robe, can have nothi for its object but what is corporeal or bodily, here is ſtra philoſophy; and ſuch a confounding of imaginary and int lectual ideas, even where he ſeems to red marches betw them, as it is hard to think that a man who ſpeaks in t manner, could really underſtand what he was ſaying, or ta up the meaning of his own words, and be any way conſiſt with himſelf.

(2) As to the point of divinity of which he ſpeaks, it ſee impoſſible that he can underſtand it; for he ſpeaks of c ceiving Chriſt to be true and real man; and then adds, "T is what is what is called (and I ſuppoſe never by any but hi ſelf that I know of) an imaginary idea of him." Here ſtrange divinity, a confounding of things every way diſtin

For, (1.) To conceive of Chriſt, is to conceive of a perſon God man; and this perſon is inconceivable by an imaginary idea. (2.) To conceive of this perſon that he is true and real man, is to conceive a truth relating to that perſon, a truth teſtified in the word of God. This truth is not the object of an imaginary idea; for a truth is no corporeal object, but only the object of faith. Therefore, (3.) To ſay of this conception of this perſon, that it is the imaginary idea of him, is a very groſs abſurdity both in divinity and philoſophy. For neither the perſon nor the truth is the object of a corporeal idea, but only the human body of Chriſt abſtractly conſidered, as to its outward form. For even the intrinſical nature of the body is not the object of an imaginary idea. We can form no idea of what we do not or cannot ſee, nor have objected to our natural ſenſe. It is true Mr Robe ſeems, by the two following particulars, to make Chriſt's being God and then his being God man, the object of ſome other than an imaginary idea, that is, of ſome intellectual idea; whereas yet no merely intellectual idea can poſſibly conceive of this great myſtery of godlineſs, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*. But, whereas he ſays in the firſt particular here, that, to conceive of Chriſt's being true and real man, is to have an imaginary idea of him, it ſeems eaſy to prove from this, that this particular includes both the latter; that is, that his imaginary idea of him, and conceiving him to be true and real man, imports all that he ſays of conceiving him to be God and God man: And conſequently he makes all theſe the object of an imaginary idea, however abſurd and impoſſible it is that it can be ſo.

For clearing this further, I would aſk Mr. Robe, if he can form the idea of a true and real man, without forming the idea of a perſon or a ſubject that is ſaid to be that true and real man? or if he can form the idea of a human nature, without forming the idea of a human perſon as the ſubject of that humanity? If this be impoſſible, then it is equally impoſſible to form an idea of the human nature of Chriſt, without forming the idea of a human perſon in him. But, to conceive of Chriſt, as if his human nature was a human perſon, is an erroneous and blaſphemous notion of Chriſt, and contrary both to ſcripture, and all ſound divines that ever wrote upon that ſubject. If it be ſaid that he meant only the human nature of Chriſt as it is the object of an imaginary idea, becauſe part of it is corporeal; and that his divine perſon, which is God man, is not the object of a corporeal idea; If ſo then how can it be ſaid with truth, that the conceiving of Chriſt to be true and real man, is an imaginary idea of him? For Chriſt, being true and real man, by which he underſtands his human nature,

is neither a *he*, nor a *him*, nor a *perſon*, but an *it*, that is, a human nature that has no ſubject to which it is unite, no perſon by whom it can be denominate, but the perſon of the Son of God; which cannot be the object of an imaginary idea, but only of faith. The human nature of this glorious perſon is an inconceivable myſtery: *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh.*

Mr Robe's imaginary idea, which can only reſpect corporeal things, muſt neceſſarily either attribute perſonality to the human nature of Chriſt, or humanity to the divine nature; Both which are abſurd and blaſphemous. It aſcribes perſonality to the human nature, becauſe it cannot conceive of a human nature without a human perſon or ſubject It aſcribes humanity to the divine nature, becauſe it cannot conceive of a divine perſon as the ſubject (or *ſuppoſitum*) of this humanity, without putting a human form upon it, or making ſome corporeal picture of it in the brain. Both which are abſurd blaſphemous and idolatrous.

Mr. Robe goes on (p 31, 32.) to confound his imaginary idea with knowledge; as if theſe were the ſame, and had the ſame objects; whereas I have ſhewn, that the object of the idea is only corporeal things, as corporeal: But the object of rational knowledge is not only corporeal things, but ſpiritual; and corporeal things, not as corporeal, but as intelligible. It is ſure, as he ſays, *that we cannot believe without knowledge* But may we not have a rational, intellectual and ſpiritual knowledge of Chriſt, without confounding this with the ſenſitive knowledge and imaginary idea of a human body? If we cannot know him ſpiritually without knowing him carnally; yet is it not the part that rational believing ſouls ought to act, even rationally and believingly to diſtinguiſh between a ſpiritual and carnal act, and to ſeparate the one from the other; yea, to fly from the carnal conception and mere ſenſitive idea, as they would fly from the devil? Mr. Robe's introducing Mr. Durham here to ſhew there muſt be knowledge in order to faith, is quite out of purpoſe; unleſs Mr. Durham had made an imaginary idea a part of that knowledge; which he will neither find him nor any man of knowledge do.

Mr. Robe, p. 32. has theſe following words: "What Mr Ralph Erſkine and you (meaning Mr. Fiſher) muſt aſſert, ſeeing you contradict theſe poſitions, is, That we can think upon Chriſt as God man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, or in his human nature conſiſting of a true body and a reaſonable ſoul. 2*dly*, That we can receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt offered unto us as God-man in the goſpel, without an idea of

ught of him as man; and that we ought never to think
n him as man, or have any idea or conception of him in
human nature"

For clearing this matter, I remark, (1.) When Mr Robe
s, that we cannot think of Christ or believe in him as God
n, without an imaginary idea of him as man, but cannot
, we must have an imaginary idea of him as God-man, then
must mean, that the God man is the object of faith, but
rist as man is the object of fancy and imagination: And so
nes to own almost as much as Mr. Erskine did, that his
hood, or human body, properly is not, as such, the object
faith, but of sense and fancy; even though he would fain
ke it error and blasphemy in Mr Erskine to say so. For,
Christ as man be considered the object of faith the same way
Christ as God is the object of it, why may not the faith of
e God-man be understood, without the fancy terminating on
e man, or rather on the image or vile picture of his human
dy in the brain?

(2.) If to have an imaginary idea of Christ as man (accord-
g to Mr. Robe's explication of it from Mr. Durham) be on-
meant of understanding or conceiving in the judgment,
t he is man, otherwise they cannot believe; then the whole
nount of his arguing for that imaginary idea is this, That
ne can believe in Christ as God man without knowing that
is God, and knowing that he is man. And who that hath
mmon sense, will deny this, as Mr. Durham lays it? But
r. Robe's "imaginary idea of Christ as man," and Mr. Dur-
m's proposition of this truth, "That Christ must be known
be man," are vastly different things. That Christ is man,
a truth to be known and believed, and a proper object of
th, as it is revealed in the word. But the imaginary idea
Christ as man, or of his natural human body as such, is a
ture or image of Christ's body in the brain; and is no more
object of faith than any other corporeal thing represent-
to the fancy in a corporeal idea. To know the man Christ,
one thing, and is consistent enough with the faith of the
rson God-man: But, to have an imaginary idea of Christ
man, is another thing, and quite extraneous from faith, and
ways allied to it. Though it should attend and accompa-
faith, it does not accompany it as a help, but a hinder-
ce; nor as a friend, but a foe: For faith leads to the man
rist in the word and revelation; but this idea leads to a
rist in the fancy and imagination.

(3.) If Mr. Robe's assertion on this head were reduced to
argument formally, it might be to this purpose: The faith

of Christ's manhood imports the knowledge of Christ's bein man: But the knowledge of Christ's being man cannot b without an imaginary idea of him as man: Therefore, ther can be no faith of Christ's manhood, without an imaginar idea of him as man. The major I allow But the mino propoſition, That the knowledge of Christ's being man can not be without the imaginary idea of him as man, I deny, i ſo far as it makes a confuſion of two ideas that are diſtinct i their nature; for the imaginary idea of Christ as man is a ſen ſitive and corporeal idea; but the knowledge of Chriſt's be ing man, is what imports an intellectual idea, and belongs t the underſtanding. They differ alſo in their object: The ob ject of an imaginary idea is only Chriſt's human body; bu the object of that intellectual idea, that accompanies th knowledge of Chriſt's being man, is the truth or revelatio relating to his manhood. But, to ſay none can have the in tellectual idea, without having the imaginary, or that the im age of Chriſt in the brain is helpful to the knowledge of Chri in the underſtanding, and the one is neceſſary to the other is childiſh and fooliſh, as I have already ſhewn, and unwor thy of the pen and pains either of a philoſopher or divine For the more ſpiritually we are exerciſed, and the more fre we are from theſe ſenſitive and corporeal ideas, the better and more conform to God

(4.) While a believer hath a body and ſoul unite, he hat both a ſenſitive and intellectual faculty, as well as faith Senſe views objects of ſenſe and corporeal things, or *ſenſibilia* as ſuch. The intellect views intelligible things, or *intelligibilia*, as ſuch. Faith, belonging to the intellect, as it view truth, or credible things, hath for its object *credibilia* or *credenda*. The object of ſenſe cannot, as ſuch, be the object o faith: For, to ſay that faith hath a corporeal object, is t ſpeak nonſenſe, inconſiſtent both with philoſophy and divini ty. Neither reaſon nor religion can admit of ſuch an abſur dity; which yet is involved in a thouſand expreſſions Mr Robe hath about imaginary ideas of corporeal objects, con founding thoſe with the object of faith.

While ſoul and body are together, though the ſoul canno act without the body; yet how do we abuſe the reaſon tha God hath given us, if we cannot diſtinguiſh between the act of the body as ſuch, and the acts of the ſoul, but confound th animal life of the brute, with the rational life of the man Even ſo, though faith be in a ſubject that hath a body witl corporeal ſenſation, as well as a ſoul with rational reflection how is faith abuſed, if it cannot diſtinguiſh between object

of natural knowledge, such as brute beasts have of outward bodily things, Jude, verse 10. and objects of rational knowledge, such as men ought to have of intelligible things? and much more, if it cannot distinguish between objects of sense, that are things outwardly visible, or even inwardly imaginable by an imaginary idea; and objects of faith, which respect things only as they are credible or *credenda*, that may or ought to be believed? Not to distinguish here, is to confound faith with sense, and to blend things carnally sensible, with things spiritually intelligible, flesh and spirit, earth and hell together.

(5.) Mr. Robe here supposes, there can be no knowledge that Christ is man, without the imaginary idea of him as man. But God, and angels, and souls departed know Christ to be man, and yet without any corporeal faculties such as that of an imaginary idea. And, though the soul united to the body, hath sense still acting at the same time that reason, judgment, and understanding act, and so it may be supposed there is still the act of the sensitive faculty; yet, why should he deny the power of the intellectual faculties, as if they were not able to know that Christ is man, without having his corporeal image in the brain? Rational knowledge belongs properly to the soul; but imaginary ideas belong more to the body. Hence the bodies even of men can act, as it were, without the agency, though not without the presence of the rational soul, as when they eat or drink to excess, like brute beasts, or worse: And may we not suppose, that the rational souls of men can act sometimes without the agency, though not without the presence of the body, and its senses and imagination forming outward and inward shapes and images of corporeal things? Which, when they obtrude themselves, reason itself must instantly avoid, ere it can have a right notion of any truth relating to these corporeal things; and much more will faith shake off any such vermin, when it is found creeping into the heart. For, as no corporeal object can be the object of rational understanding, but under some intelligible consideration; so neither can it be the object of faith, but under some divine or spiritual consideration.

(6.) Mr. Robe here supposing Mr. Erskine excludes the human nature of Christ from being any part of the object of faith, it is to be remarked, that he indeed excludes the fancy of Christ's human body, or the imaginary idea of it, from being any part thereof or having any share therein. It is no part of the object of faith as *justifying*; for that is Christ as a *Priest, the Lord our righteousness*. It is no part of the object of faith as it is *sanctifying*; for that is Christ as a *King*, and in his Spirit

and grace, and as he is *the Lord our ſtrength*. It is no pa
it as it is *ſaving faith*; for that is Chriſt in *all his offices*.
no part of faith as it is *God glorifying*, any more than as i
ſoul ſaving faith; for God is not glorified by any man's f
or imaginary idea of Chriſt's human body, but by the
of his humanity, as nite to his divinity in one perſon.
are not to confound either the act of faith with the a
fancy, or the object of faith with the object of fancy.

From all which it follows as too true what Mr. Fiſher
"That to aſſert, that we cannot receive Chriſt as offer
the goſpel without an imaginary idea of him as man, h
native tendency to lead people off from the true Chriſt i
word to a falſe Chriſt upon the imagination." This infe
Mr. Robe complains of, and then adds, p. 33. "Mr. F
Erſkine doth, in the expreſſeſt terms, exclude the humar
ture of the glorious Mediator God-man from being any
of the object of faith." (And it is well he cites for i
words following:) "*Can that be any part of the object of
which is perceptible to every man's fancy, and is obvious to no
diſcerning?* And argueth (ſays Mr Robe) all alongſt ag
all conceptions of Chriſt as man, or in his human natur
carnal, vain, and unprofitable, yea hurtful and hinderi
faith. And again, To look on Chriſt as man, and yet, a
ſame time, to conceive and receive him as God man, are
contradictions."—Beſides what I have ſaid in anſwer to
elſewhere, I would remark, that Mr Robe goes on her
confound faith and fancy, by making that the object of
which is the object of every man's fancy; as if the groſs,
nal, and ſenſitive imagination about a natural body whi
ery man may have in his head, were any part of that
itual conſideration and believing contemplation of Ch
human nature ſubſiſting in his divine perſon. This nece
ly includes the believing apprehenſion and faith of his h
nature thus ſubſiſting; but the other diverts the mind
an object of faith to an object of ſenſe; from the true C
witho t us in the word, to a falſe Chriſt within s on the
cy; from a whole Chriſt, to a half, yea, to that which i
the half of that half, but a mere bodily object: And ſo
be a ſinful conception; and unbelief, inſtead of faith.
Robe's imaginary idea or fancy, according to his own co
ſion, can ſee only a mere man at the utmoſt, becauſe the o
of it is corporeal. And, when that is reckoned a ſeeing
part of Chriſt, it is but a chimera, a fancy indeed, a ſeei
a thing that never was: For, as Chriſt was never a mere
ſo a mere man was never any part of the object of faith.
Robe indeed [illegible] that he never alledged a mere man

an part of the object of faith If ſo, then why does he alledge that that mere manhood which can only be the object of his imaginary idea, is any part of the object of faith? Nay, but he may alledge, he only made that imaginary idea helpful and neceſſary to the diſcerning the object of faith But how he can think the fancy and imagination of a mere man can be helpful to the knowledge of a God man is ſtrange. When faith comes by hearing it takes up Chriſt to be what he is but, if fancies and imaginary ideas come by hearing Chriſt is not thereby formed in the heart really, but only in the head notionally Indeed fancy can ſee and apprehend all that Mr Robe ſpeaks of as the object of an imaginary idea. But the object of faith cannot be ſeen, and is ſo far as fancy cannot reach; for it is ſeen only by ſpiritual illuminations, and a *faith of divine operation*, through the *revelation of Chriſt in us* Gal. i. 16.

SECT. III.

Mr. Robe ſays p 32 "That, accurately ſpeaking an imaginary idea is that idea which the underſtanding forms of corporeal things abſent from us, by the help of the imagination, preſenting the ſpecies or image of theſe corporeal things received and laid up in the imagination: For, as it is not our ſenſes that apprehend corporeal things preſent, but our eyes, by the intervention of our ſenſes; ſo it is not the imagination that hath what we call the idea of any corporeal object abſent, but the ſoul and underſtanding, by the intervention of the imagination; according to that rule, *Oportet intelligentem phantaſmata ſpeculari*" Here ſeems to be a very learned philoſophical diſcourſe. But, before I offer remarks upon it, I muſt compare it with two other paſſages in Mr. Robe's book: One is, p 26 where he ſays, "The representation of theſe ſenſible objects is not ſenſible: For, though the ſpecies in the imagination are corporeal and material, yet they are ſo ſubtile that they can never affect any of the ſenſes; nor is it deſigned they ſhould: they can only be perceived by the underſtanding." And p 62, 63 where he ſays, "Mr. Erſkine ſhould have proven, that our ſenſes and imagination, inſtead of being greatly helpful to us, do greatly hinder us to think upon the nature and perfections of God. But this is what he hath not done, and ſhall never be able to do, unleſs he can prove, that the natural eſſential powers God hath given to us as men, are not helpful to us; but we would know God much better if we wanted them: That is to ſay, a man would attain the knowledge of God's nature and per-

fections, by the visible things of the creation, much better, he were blind, deaf, without feeling and other senses, and without the faculty of the imagination." On this last passage I shall offer remarks when I come forward to it. But at present, comparing it with the preceding passages, I remark, (1.) That what Mr. Robe here says, puts me in mind of the Epicurean philosophy; in which it is said, "Sense is a motion of the soul, depending upon the body; that the principle of sensation is lodged in the soul, yet the body perceives and feels along with it, &c. The eye, for instance, sees in conjunction with the soul; for, if they were only doors for the soul to see through, (as some will have it,) we might see things better if our eyes were out*." Then the account Epicurus gives of the intellect, or rational part, "Its property is to think, apprehend, and reason, when the sense strikes it. It consists of the most subtile, smooth, and round bodies, than which nothing can be swifter. Whence it is, that it thinks and performs its office with an unimaginable celerity, &c. As the eye sees by the influx of images, so is the intellect determined to think by the same influence; only the little images are much subtiler than those that affect the eye, as being qualified to penetrate through the body, and adapted to the contexture of the intellect." One would think, that, when Mr. Robe makes so great ado with senses and images or imaginary ideas, he had got some smack of this philosophy of Epicurus. But that of old Aristotle seems to be more agreeable to christianity, "That the soul is immaterial and immortal; that it does not consist of elements; for then it would understand nothing more than the elements themselves: That the intellectual faculty of the soul is peculiar to man, being that whereby we know and understand: That the intellect is either passive, which receives the species from intellectual objects; or active, which is the cognoscitive power enlightening phantasms, and the passive intellect: That the former is mortal, which is the cause of forgetfulness; the other separable from the body, void of passion immortal, and eternal. Again, that the understanding or intellect is either theoretic, the object of which is truth and falshood, or practic, the object of which is good and evil†: That the acts of the intellect are either simple apprehension, or complex, uniting things by affirmation or negation. The latter are always either true or false; the former are neither." Where, by the bye, we may learn, that what Mr. Robe calls the object of faith, namely, Christ as man, or

* *Lives of ancient Philosophers*, p. (mihi) 464, 467.
† *Life of Aristotle*, p. (mihi) 231.

in his human nature. is, as he expreſſes it, neither the object of faith nor of unbelief. being at moſt a ſimple apprehenſion; and conſequently, according to the r les of philoſophy, neither a truth nor a falſhood. Unleſs ſomething is ſ ppoſed to be affirmed or denied concerning this manhood or h manity of Chriſt, then it is either true or falſe; and ſo can be the ob-j-t of faith, or a thing to be believed or not.

(2) According to this philoſophy, whereby he ſeems ſo m ch to confound the ſenſitive with the intellectual power, and the animal with the rational life, without redding marches. he may aſcribe rational underſtanding to a ſpaniel dog, ſeeking after, and ho ling for his abſent maſter. And how much this do trine ma tend to ſtrengthen the hands of Epicures and atheiſts in ſuppoſing that men have no other ſoul or underſtanding than a br te beaſt that periſheth, is eaſy to ſee.

(3) Whereas he mentions that as a re eived rule, *Oportet Intelligentem phantaſmata ſpeculari*. he may ſee the contrary aſſerted by a great philoſopher, Heeriboord, diſp vol ii p 221. *Mens non indigeat ſemper phantaſmatis ad ſuas operationes*. Which is laid down as a ſtated rule, in oppoſition to that which Mr. Robe mentions, viz a ſa ing of old Ariſtotle, much made uſe of, as Heeribord ſhews, b adverſaries and improven by them that deny the ſpirituality and immortality of the ſoul, contrary to the deſign of Ariſtotle himſelf That the underſtanding acts by fancies and viewing of phantaſms, or merely by material and corporeal powers and fa ulties, and not by a power proper to itſelf and independent upon the body, is a principle embraced b atheiſts, thus arguing namel , If an act-ion of the ſo l is proper to it, and independent upon the body, it is the underſtanding But if the underſtanding cannot be, or act without fancies and phantaſms, the fancy being a orporeal fa ulty, and acted by the help of the body, even as the phantaſm itſelf is corporeal; hence, they infer, the ſoul itſelf i material, corporeal, and mortal Againſt this atheiſti al principle, the learned Heeriboord diſputes at great length. vol i. p 163, 164, 165 and parti ularly againſt that philoſophical maxim above mentioned; which Mr Robe cites as a rule, and wo ld thereby confirm his poſitions in that paragraph And it is true that rule holds with reference to corporeal objects Mr Robe ſpeaks of. The underſtanding cannot perceive them as they are ſenſibles, witho t ſenſes and fancy, and without corporeal ſenſitive powers But in this reſpect, they are not the proper objects of rational underſtanding unleſs theſe material objects be apprehended under the notion of intelligibles: And then they are not viewed pro-

perly as corporeal, but under ſome ſpiritual, inviſible, immaterial conſideration; which renders them the objects of underſtanding and judgment, not of mere ſenſe and fancy, whatever cloſe connection there is between theſe ſenſitive and intellectual faculties, while ſoul and body is unite. Thus the ſame learned author ſhews, how the underſtanding acting by phantaſms, is true only with reference to things ſenſible and external, not with reference to things ſpiritual and inviſible: With reſpect to which he proves the following poſition, namely, That all underſtanding is ſo proper to the ſoul even in this life, that not only hath it no dependence upon the phantaſy, as upon the efficient and ſubject thereof, but hath alſo ſometimes no dependence upon the phantaſy or phantaſm, as upon the object or occaſion thereof; and inſtanceth the knowledge that the ſoul may have of God and angels, and of itſelf: And then he refutes the error of thoſe who aſſert, that the underſtanding hath no perception of ſpiritual things, God, angels, or of itſelf, but by analogy of things corporeal, and according to material objects formed in the fancy; ſhewing, that this erroneous ſentiment flows from men's not looking more narrowly into the condition of their own mind, when they view ſpiritual things, or from their forming moſt erroneouſly in their mind very groſs conceptions of ſpiritual things, as if they were almoſt corporeal. Whence is it, ſays he, that the eye can ſee bodies and not ſpirits? Becauſe it is corporeal, and not ſpiritual; and there is no proportion between a corporeal organ and a ſpiritual object. But whence does the ſoul ſee and underſtand ſpiritual and immaterial things? Even becauſe there is ſome proportion between theſe and the ſoul, which is immaterial and ſpiritual; and it evidences itſelf to be ſo, by being able to know and apprehend ſpiritual things, even without the help of corporeal ſenſes and phantaſms. Much more to this purpoſe hath that learned author, and far better expreſſions in the Latin, which for brevity's ſake I do not cite. But it may be thought, to what purpoſe is all this brought in againſt Mr Robe, whoſe imaginary idea he owns reſpects only corporeal things; and therefore the philoſophical maxim about phantaſms which he cites, ſeems abundantly to anſwer his purpoſe? I own it would have done ſo, if he were not confounding the objects of faith with the objects of fancy, by making ſomething corporeal, which is the object of fancy, to be alſo the object of faith, namely, the human body of Chriſt, as it is the object of an imaginary idea; in which reſpect it is only the object of ſenſe or fancy; whereas the object of faith is no viſible or corporeal thing, as ſuch; no not the human body of Chriſt itſelf, unleſs it be conſidered, as it ought

to be, under ſome ſpiritual, inviſible conſideration, as it is held forth to us in the ſcripture. The rule therefore that Mr. Robe here brings in, is very impertinently adduced, when his ſcope is to explain what he calls the object of faith, and yet proves to be the object of ſenſe, by a rule that relates to ſenſibles, more than to intelligibles; far leſs does it relate to ſpiritual's and ſupernaturals, that are the objects of faith.

Again, this rule of philoſophy mentioned by Mr. Robe, is alſo oppoſed and contradicted by the learned profeſſor De Vries, ſpeaking of incorporeal things: (as all objects of faith properly are; however Mr. Robe in this paragraph explains his imaginary ideas of corporeal things, which elſewhere he makes ſo helpful to ſpiritual knowledge and ſaving faith, and ſo corporeal helps to the moſt ſpiritual things.) The foreſaid author, I ſay, ſpeaking of incorporeal things, declares that bodies, or corporeal things give occaſion, and only an occaſion, to conceive of them: which occaſion the mind could not make uſe of, ſo as thence to proceed to the thoughts of incorporeal things in an incorporeal manner. And though the thoughts of ſpiritual things may ſo far depend upon ſenſe as that it may furniſh occaſions of forming them; yet, for the phantaſms of theſe ſpiritual things, (as all objects of faith are) to be exhibite to the mind, is of itſelf directly oppoſite to the very nature of things*. Where alſo we ſee, how that renowned profeſſor of philoſophy, as well as the former, limits, reſtricts, and ſhews in ſome caſes the falſhood of theſe vulgar rules Mr. Robe walks by, namely, That nothing is in the underſtanding that was not firſt in the ſenſe: And that a man cannot underſtand without the help of phantaſms and corporeal repreſentations; as if the ſoul depended abſolutely upon the body in its operation, becauſe of its union therewith. In oppoſition to theſe vulgar rules of philoſophy, I might alſo adduce the learned Maſtricht diſputing at great length, *Carteſianarum gangræna*, p. 206, 207, 208. But, for brevity's ſake, I here cite no more witneſſes on this point, than the two forementioned; who, together with Maſtricht, ſhew how theſe

* Horum concipiendorum occaſionem ſuppeditant quandoque corpora: ſed tantum occaſionem; qua mens uti non poſſet; ut inde ad non-corporeorum cogitationes progrederetur, niſi modo non corporeo cogitaret ſpiritus non corporea —Etiam cogitationes de objectis ſpiritualibus a ſenſu hactenus pendere; quatenus hic earum formandarum ſuppeditat occaſiones, evincit harum in illis, quibis occaſionibus deſtituuntur, carentia. Talium interim phantaſmata menti exhibere, ipſius rei naturæ per ſe directe adverſatur. Atqui hinc apparet, quo modo limitandæ veniant, ut ſint veræ, vulgares regulæ: *Nihil eſt in intellectu, quod non ante fuerit in ſenſu: Oportet intelligentem phantaſmata ſpeculari, &c.* Determinat de ſpiritu, p. 73 *De mente humana*, p. 117, 118.

rules of Ariſtotle, and his followers the Peripateties, have been abuſed, contrar to Ariſtotle's own mind and intention.

Theſe learned philoſophers I have cited here, diſtinguiſh between a twofold dependence (1) Subjective and efficient, as that whereby the ſight depends upon the eye This they deny the ſoul hath upon the body. (2) A dependence objective and occaſional; as that whereby ſight may be ſaid to depend upon a wall, a tree, or any thing elſe, ſeen, or preſented accidentally or occaſionally to the ſight This they allow it may have upon the body, and but ſometimes. And hence no fancy or imaginary idea of corporeal things, no objects or ideas of outward or inward ſenſation, can be any way helpful to the underſtanding, by the imagination preſenting to it the ſpecies or image of theſe corporeal things, as Mr. Robe ſpeaks Bodily eyes can only help to ſee bodily things: And though they may yield occaſion to the mind, yet they cannot help the eyes of the mind to ſee any ſpiritual objects; no more can any bodily images or phantaſms. Chriſt took occaſion from a well to ſpeak of the *water of life*, John iv from the multiplication of the loaves, to ſpeak of the *bread of life*, John vi from the fruit of the vine in the laſt ſupper, to ſpeak of the *true vine*. Thus, the idea of outward things may miniſter occaſion to meditate on ſpiritual things: And the ſenſitive idea may give occaſion to the intellect; but can properly give no more help to ſee ſpiritual things, than a glaſs that helps a man to ſee his face and body, can help him to ſee his mind and ſoul Thus the word of God is a glaſs, wherein truths are repreſented to our underſtanding by innumerable ſimilies drawn from ſenſible objects; as, when Chriſt is ſpoke of under the notion of a *Vine*, a *Door*, a *Rock*, a *Well*, a *Tree*, &c. the notion of theſe things in the head may give occaſion, but can give no help to know the truth intended by them The imaginative idea cannot give help to rational knowledge. Senſe can only help to diſcern ſenſibles, the intellect to diſcern intelligibles; and faith to diſcern the objects of faith

Theſe obſerves may ſufficiently anſwer likewiſe the boaſted quotations Mr. Robe produces from Flavel, Burgeſs, and Charnock, in his letter to Mr Fiſher, p 9 10 whom he quotes for proving that we cannot think of things inviſible without the help of ſenſes and phantaſms, or imaginary ideas But *as* it is eaſy for any that reads theſe authors, to ſee that in theſe places quoted, they are ſpeaking not only of ſenſitive knowledge, I mean, the knowledge that comes by the providential ſubſerviency of ſenſations, in which view it is certain, that *nothing is in* the underſtanding that is not firſt in the ſenſes, *in ſome reſpects*, (of which maxim I treat further afterwards,)

but that they are speaking especially of the heavy, though necessary incumbrances and instructions which the soul's intellective knowledge hath by these bodily senses and phantasms, while in the flesh: So it is easy to prove, that these three divines are so far from answering Mr. *Robe*'s purpose, that they are of the same mind with these philosophers I have above quoted. I have exemplified this with relation to *Burgesi* and *Glanvil* elsewhere in this book; and I shall here do the same with relation to *Hovel*. The passage Mr. *Robe* quotes in him is to be found in his works, *p.* 333. where his professed design is not to shew what Mr. Robe wants in him, That truth always transmits itself to our understanding even in this life, by contracting affinity first with our fancies and exterior senses. But the design of the author there is, by such words as these, to shew the difference between the easy way that separate souls attain knowledge, and the way that souls yet in the body do ordinarily now attain it. Mr. Robe takes advantage of what is expressed on this head; but overlooks what the same author says, when speaking directly to this point of the soul's knowing by phantasms and images, *p.* 283. where citing these words, *Phantasia mentî offert phantasmata*, PICOL. he says, "The fancy indeed, while the soul is embodied, ordinarily and for the most part, presents the appearances and likenesses of things to the mind; but yet it can form thoughts of things which the fancy can present no image of; as when the soul thinks of God, or of itself. When we think of God, (says Maximus Tyrius, diss 1.) we must think of nothing material; μήτε μέγεθος, μήτε χρῶμα, μήτε ἄλλο τι ὕλης πάθος." But, more particularly, *p.* 319 where he appears to be of the very same mind with Heereboord and De Vries, as above mentioned. I here shall note down his words in answer to the atheistical objection relating to the soul's understanding only by senses, phantasms, species and images; of which the soul being deprived by separation from the body, it consequently understands nothing. He answers thus, "We deny (says he) that the soul knows nothing now but by phantasms and images: For it knows itself, its own nature and powers, of which it cannot feign or form any image or representation. What form, shape, or figure can the fancy of a man cast his soul into, to help him to understand its nature?" Here he cites Conimb. de anima, l. 3. c. 8 q. 8. saying, "*Intellectus incorporea & immaterialia contemplatur, ut Deum & intelligentias; sed hæc nullo modo in phantasiam cadunt, cum sint extra fines corporeæ virtutis*; i. e. The understanding views things that are incorporeal and immaterial, such as God and intelli-

gen es: But these things do no way fall into, or light i fancy, because they are without the bounds or limits of poreal powers — To understand b species (says he) not agree to the soul naturally and necessarily, but by accic as it is now in union with the body. But, though we g the soul does in many cases now make use of phantasms, that the agitation of the spirits which are in the brain heart, are conjunct in its acts of cogitation and intellect yet, as a searching scholar well observes the spirits are ra subjects than instruments of these actions; and the whol sence of these acts is antecedent to the motions of the spi as when we use a pen in writing, or a knife in cutting t is an operation of the soul upon them, before there can b operation b them They act as they are first acted; ar do these bodily spirits. So that to speak properly, the l is bettered b the use the soul makes of it in these noble tions; but the soul is not advantaged b its being tied to a bod It can do its own work without it; its operat follow its essence, not the bod to which it is for a time ed." And here Flavel cites upon the margin, Aquinas, q 8. and Howe's blessedness, p 174, 175 More to this pose he there hath; and then adds, "I wish the favoure this opinion may take heed, lest it carry them further they intend, even to a denying the soul's existence and mortality, and turn them into downright Somatists and a ists "——This leads me further to

An Inquiry into some philosophical maxims concerning senses phantasms.

It may be very necessary for many in this present age, I offer some more remarks upon Mr Robe's philosophy prefixed by him, p 33. in these words: "For, as it is not senses that apprehend corporeal things present, but our i b the intervention of our senses; so it is not our imagina that hath what we call the idea of corporeal objects abs but the soul and understanding b the intervention of the agination: according to that rule, *Oportet intelligentem p tasmata speculari*"

This being then a stated principle of Mr. Robe's, and damental to the whole ideal superstructure he builds upo it is fit it be examined. In order to which, it may be co ered, *imo*, That, though I assert not, with some, that *both* two souls, viz. a sensitive and a rational soul; yet, *orthodox divines* and philosophers, I allow that these are

iſtinct faculties of the ſoul*; from which, and other ſub faculties, the ſoul comes under various diſtinct names and denominations, according to its various powers and operations†. The principal faculties are the ſenſitive and rational; from whence, according to ſome, ſoul and ſpirit are diſtinguiſhed in ſcripture, as 1 Theſſ v. 23. Now, theſe diſtinct faculties are not to be ſo confounded, as if, whenever the ſoul animates the body, ſo that it acts ſenſitively, then it were to be ſaid, it acts rationally; and as if ſenſe and imagination were acts of the rational ſoul, as ſuch. Therefore, when it is ſaid, "That it is not our ſenſes that apprehend corporeal things preſent, but our ſouls by the intervention of our ſenſes;" this ſeems to me a ſtrange way of ſpeaking: becauſe, as it were very abſurd for one to ſay, My ſoul ſees ſuch a man, my ſoul hears ſuch a ſong, my ſoul taſtes ſuch a piece of ſavoury meat, &c. as if theſe were proper actions of the ſoul: which yet every one knows belong to the body, or rather to the perſon that hath both ſoul and body. To ſay, a man or a perſon apprehends corporeal things preſent by his ſenſes is indeed true and intelligible; becauſe this apprehenſion is an act of a perſon conſiſting of ſoul and body: but acts belonging properly to the perſon, cannot, without abſurdity, be appropriate to a part of the perſon, eſpecially that part which is not the ſubject of theſe actions. Hence, one may as well ſay, it is his body that knows believes, and loves; as to ſay, it is his ſoul that ſees, hears, and taſtes. When a perſon apprehends any thing by his outward ſenſes, or ſenſitive faculties of ſeeing, hearing, taſting, feeling, ſmelling: theſe, being bodily ſenſes, are properly aſcribed to the body; not to the ſoul, which hath none of theſe ſenſes. Hence, the ſoul can apprehend nothing by the mere help and intervention of the ſenſes, except in a ſenſitive way, or in a ſenſual manner, like the fool in the goſpel that ſaid, *Soul, take thy reſt, eat, drink, and be merry; thou haſt much goods laid up for many years:* when he had nothing laid for his ſoul but a barnful of corn. A ſenſitive apprehenſion of outward corporeal things is no act of the rational ſoul, as it is rational; but rather as it is animal, in regard it is the ſoul that animates the body, and the bodily ſenſes. When

* *Impoſſibile eſt in uno homine eſſe plures animas per eſſentiam differentes; ſed una tantum eſt anima, quæ vegitativæ, & ſenſitivæ, & intellectivæ officiis fungitur.* Aquin. 12 q. 6. art 3.

† *Anima qua vivimus, mens qua cogit mus.* Lactat Iſidor. *Quod latius ita exprimere licet.*

Corpora noſtra animans, *Anima* eſt: *Animus* vero, dum vultus
Spiritus, ut prius dominetur vel noverit, eſt Mens:
Dum recolit, *Memor* eſt: *Ratio*, dum judicat æqua:
Affectus, *Affectus*: dum cupit, *Cor* tibi reſtat.

therefore it is said, "That it is not our senses that apprehend corporeal things present, but our souls by the intervention of our senses; if it is meant a rational apprehension, or some intellectual consideration of them, then it is not the help and intervention of our senses, but the help and intervention of reason and understanding, that only can bring about this apprehension: And that because sense can lead no man any farther than to act sensitively; reason only can help him to act rationally. We are to distinguish, then, between rational acts of the rational soul, and sensitive acts of it. Sense and imagination are not in themselves rational acts, though influenced by the rational soul, as animating the body, and quickening it, by giving life, sense and motion to it; yet these are not rational acts, but corporeal acts of corporeal faculties; for (as Mr. Robe himself brings in Charnock, Let p 8. saying) "the faculties that serve for contemplation are either corporeal, as sense and fancy, &c." In which words it is evident both sense and imagination are owned to be corporeal faculties.

Again, when it is said, "The imagination hath not what we call the ideas of corporeal objects absent, but the soul and understanding by the intervention of the imagination;" the same thing may be asserted of this, as of the former. For imagination is nothing else but the inward sense or notion that a man hath in his head of an absent corporeal object. Now, this cannot be called an act of the rational soul as it is rational, but as it is sensitive; for fancy and imagination about corporal objects is no other thing but inward sensation, or a notional seeing, hearing, tasting, or handling of these outward things: Which internal sensation or perception in the fancy includes in itself no reflection or rational apprehension, while the soul is not acting rationally and intellectually. It seems therefore both false and fallacious in Mr Robe, to assert here, "That it is not the imagination that hath the idea of the corporeal object, but the soul and understanding by the intervention of the imagination" To put soul and understanding here together, is deceitful; because the soul as it is sensitive is only here concerned; not the soul as it is rational and intellective. For the imaginative faculty, terminating upon objects of sense, belongs to the soul as it is sensitive only; and not as it is intelligent or rational: That is, fancy or imagination is no act of the understanding, or of the rational soul, as such; but only of that soul as it is sensitive: Nor can it act upon these corporeal objects intelligently or rationally, *by* the help and intervention of fancy and imagination; *but only by* the help of reason and understanding.

ado, I would here next conſider the rule Mr Robe appeals to, *viz. Oportet intelligentem phantaſmata ſpeculari*; that is, The ſpeculation of phantaſms is neceſſary to the underſtanding of things or truths. When the ſcope of Mr. Robe's letter ſeems ſo much to lie in making ſenſes and imaginations ſuch great helps to knowledge, another rule in philoſophy very ſib and ſimilar to this here mentioned, ſeems to be equally eſpouſed by his doctrine; and as neceſſary to ſupport his principle anent the ſenſes, as this to ſupport his principle anent imaginations: The rule is, as elſewhere mentioned, viz *Nihil eſt in intellectu quod non fuit prius in ſenſibus*; that is, Nothing is in the underſtanding that was not firſt in the ſenſes. Though Mr. Robe has not mentioned this, as he does, and ſeems alſo to adopt elſewhere, ſecond letter to Mr. Fiſher, p. 7. yet it is of the ſame import with the former; which however improven by philoſophers, yet how aptly brought in here by Mr. Robe, and mixed with his divinity or doctrine relating to the object of ſaving faith, may be conſidered. Theſe rules relate indeed to natural ſenſe and fancies: And it is no wonder that ſome ſuch rule be here adduced; for the confounding of faith and ſenſe, or faith and fancy, ſeems to be the great deſign and end of Mr Robe's performance, (I mean, *intentio operis*); whether it be the deſign of the performer not.

However unfit I am for a work of this ſort, yet providence ſeems to call me out into this difficult taſk of eſſaying to ſhew the vain philoſophy imported in theſe generally received rules, eſpecially when applied to divine ſubjects and matters of faith. It is ſaid of Democritus, that there is nothing in the whole workmanſhip of nature, of which he did not write. And of Ariſtotle it is ſaid, he was the rule, yea, and the miracle of nature, learning itſelf and the very ſun of knowledge. Yet both theſe are not only ſaid, but proved by Lactantius to be learned idiots[e]. How ſays one, have the ſchools of Epicurus and Ariſtotle, (from whom the above rules and maxims are borrowed) the Cartesians, and other ſects of philoſophers, abuſed and troubled the world with a kind of philoſophical enthuſiaſm? And, ſince it is alſo a true ſaying, (of Picus Mirandola, *Veritas in quæris philoſophia, invenitur theologia*), that philoſophy ſeeks, but theology finds the truth; how unſuitable is it, that divines, who may be ſuppoſed to have found the truth, ſhould borrow rules and maxims for finding it, from theſe philoſophers, who at beſt were but in queſt of truth, and yet never found it? This is like a going down to the uncircumciſed to ſharpen their tools at leaſt, as if there were not a ſwitch

[e] *Lactant.* lib. 3 cap 17, 8.

in Iſrael. Seneca had an excellent ſaying, *O quam contemptibilis eſt homo, niſi ſupra humana ſe erexerit!* O what a pitiful thing is man, if his ſoul could not ſoar above theſe earthly things! Whence we may infer, as the author of *Origin Sacræ*, "That our rational ſouls are of a far more noble and refined nature than that more feculent or dreggy principle imagination, which can go no further than our ſenſes carry it. And, if the object of faith can be no corporeal object, as ſuch but the inviſible God properly, I may ſay, with the ſame author, p 367. "We may as ſoon come by the ſight of colour to underſtand the nature of ſounds, as we can by any corporeal phantaſm come to have a true idea of God." And, p 371. "Corporeal phantaſms are ſo far from helping us in forming this idea, that they alone hinder us from a diſtinct conception of it, while we attend to them"—P. 412. "If all our conceptions were nothing elſe but the images of corporeal things left in the brain, the judgment of the mind muſt of neceſſity be according to the impreſſions that are made upon the organs of ſenſe." Epicurus made the original of all things in the univerſe to be the fortuitous concourſe of atoms, and the ſoul to be nothing elſe but a ſyſtem of the moſt ſmooth and round atoms. "Theſe atoms, (ſays the Epicurean doctrine, Or. Sacr. p. 404) of which the ſoul is compoſed, are capable of ſenſation. Thence it comes to paſs, that the ſoul ſees in the eye, hears in the ear, and ſmells in the noſtrils. This is the moſt which is made of the opinion of Epicurus, by the late ſedulous vindicator of him; which yet himſelf calls, *intolerandæ opinio*, an opinion not to be tolerated." Yet how ſib to this opinion ſeems the doctrine in hand here, which makes ſenſe, fancies, or phantaſms, the ſprings, ſources, and great helps of our knowledge of truth? This is the very doctrine of Epicurus, which Lucretius acknowledges and contends for, lib.

> Inventis primis a ſenſibus eſſe creatam
> Notitiam veri.

Where it is aſſerted, that the knowledge of truth is the creature of the ſenſes. Which aſſertion ſeems to me not very different from that maxim above mentioned, and received of many philoſophers, That there is nothing in the underſtanding that is not firſt in the ſenſe. But, however this ſeems to be the apparent order and method of the knowledge that comes by ſenſation, yet I think it would require no extraordinary ſkill in metaphyſics to ſhew, that the reverſe of that maxim is rather true in ſome reſpect, namely, That there is *nothing* in the ſenſes (as prudently uſed) that is not firſt in the *underſtanding*; that is, That there is no knowledge comes by *occaſion of the* ſenſes in man, that is not firſt ſeminally in

rational ſoul, or intellective faculty thereof; without which the bodily ſenſes in human creatures could give no manner of help or aſſiſtance towards the rational knowledge of any intelligible thing, any more than they can do in brutes.

By ſenſe in that maxim ſeems neceſſarily to be underſtood either the mere outward ſenſes, together with the inward ſenſation that belongs to the animated body; or the prudential uſe of theſe ſenſes. To underſtand it in the firſt of theſe reſpects, would render the maxim very abſurd: For it would be this, That nothing is in the underſtanding that is not firſt in the corporeal ſenſes; which were to make the bodily ſenſes not only the occaſions, but the very firſt ſeat and ſubject of reaſon and underſtanding; and thus, with the Epicureans, to make all the knowledge of truth the creature of the ſenſes. Yea, if in this reſpect there were nothing in the underſtanding that is not firſt in the ſenſes, then a man might need no more underſtanding than what he has in his bodily ſenſes; for there he has all that he can have afterwards in his underſtanding. Here is indeed a confuſed chaos, an Epicurean concourſe of very different atoms, namely, the ſenſes of the body including in their nature all the powers of the ſoul.

But then, the ſenſes may be conſidered as they are prudential (not that I think prudence applicable properly to bodily ſenſes) But I find ſome of the learned by ſenſe underſtand the prudent uſe of the ſenſes, yea, the rational improvement thereof; and ſo ſeem to make ſenſe much the ſame thing with underſtanding. And in this view to ſay, Nothing is in the underſtanding that is not firſt in the ſenſe, ſeems alſo to make that maxim abſurd; becauſe it would be to explain *(idem per idem)* the ſame thing by the ſame thing, only with another word: For, when by ſenſe is meant judgment and underſtanding, then the maxim would be, Nothing is in the underſtanding that is not firſt in the underſtanding. Thus, ſome by ſenſe mean conſcience, or the conſciouſneſs of what we think of, and a reflection on what we ſee or hear; and ſo, by having or exerciſing ſenſe, mean the ſame thing that is imported in the Latin word *ſentio* or *ſentire*, which ſignifies to think, to reſent, to ſuppoſe or deem; as alſo to feel, to diſcern, to perceive or underſtand: And ſo may be ſuppoſed to include aſſent, diſſent, conſent, and all the branches of rational cogitation. To this purpoſe are the words of Carteſius, cited by Amerpoel*: *Cogitationis nomine, intelligo illa omnia, quæ, nobis conſciis, in nobis fiunt, quatenus eorum in nobis conſcientia eſt: atque ita non modo intelligere, velle, imaginari, ſed etiam ſentire*; (ſi ſentire intelligam de

* *Carteſius Moſaizans*, p. 250, 252.

i. e. sensu, sive conscientia videndi, aut ambulandi, quia tunc refertur ad mentem, quæ sola sentit, sive cogitat se videre aut ambulare) : Idem est hic quod cogitari. To interpret sense this way, would make the above maxim import no more, but that a man can understand nothing unless he has a rational soul, capable to reflect and reason. If this were all the meaning, people might think many philosophers were idle, to tell the world, upon the matter, that no man hath sense and judgment, but he that hath it.

I know not therefore the meaning of the aforesaid rule or maxim, unless it import, that sensitive knowledge is the fountain of intellective knowledge; and so sensation the fountain of reflection, or sense the fountain of reason. And thus impressions made upon the organs of sense would be made the foundation of all human understanding: Which, according to my view, none can allow, without denying the God who made them, and gave them living rational souls, endued both with sensitive and intellective powers. These powers in man flow not from one another, however subservient they are to one another, but from the rational soul, which is capable of knowledge superior to all that comes by sensation: For, as the author of Origines Sacræ says, p. 412. "The highest conceptions which depend upon sense can amount no higher than imagination.—There is a principle in man which proceeds in a different way of operation than sensation does. There are such operations in the soul which are not imaginations." This he proceeds to prove by several arguments; such as, "(1.) The correcting the errors of imagination, &c. (2) Reflex acts of the mind upon itself.—Imagination cannot reflect upon itself; for that, proceeding upon corporeal images, must have such a representation from the senses of what it acts upon. Now, what image of itself can be conveyed to the imagination thro' the external organs of sense? The eye may see, through the motion of the objects of sight pressing upon it: But how can it see that it sees? So the imagination receives the image conveyed to the brain; but what shop hath it to make new ones of itself, and so be guilty of the greatest idolatry of worshipping its own image? But, though the imagination cannot thus reflect, yet we find such a principle within us, that is very apt to retire into itself, and recollect things which could never have been conserved so long in the shop of shadows and imaginations, &c. (3.) The profound speculations of the mind argues a power far above imagination and corporeal motion &c." And, p. 397. "Nothing can render the philosophy of *Epicurus more* justly suspected to any rational and inquisitive *mind, than his* making the senses the only certain conveyer of *the truth of* things to the mind. The senses, I grant, do w

in themſelves deceive any. But, if I make the impreſſions of ſenſe to be the only rule for the mind to judge by, of the truth of things, I make way for the greateſt impoſtures, and the moſt erring judgment: For, if my mind affirm any thing to be in its proper nature, according to that idea which the imagination hath received from the impreſſions upon the organs of ſenſe, it will be impoſſible for me ever to underſtand the right nature of things: becauſe the nature of things may remain the ſame, when all thoſe things in them which affect the organs of ſenſe, may be altered; and becauſe the various motions and configurations of the particles of matter may make ſuch an impreſſion upon the ſenſes, which may cauſe an idea of that in the things themſelves, which yet may be only in the manner of ſenſation; as ſome philoſophers ſuppoſe it to be in heat and cold. Now, if the mind judge of the nature of things according to thoſe ideas which come from the impreſſions made upon the organs of ſenſe, how is it poſſible it ſhould ever come to a right judgment of the nature of things? So that, in reference even to the groſſeſt material beings, it muſt be the perception only of the *mind*, that can truly inform us of their proper nature and eſſence. Beſides, there are many ideas of things in the mind of man, which are capable to have properties demonſtrated of them, which never owed their original to the ſenſes, and were never imported to the mind at the keys of the ſenſes: Such are all mathematical figures;—ſuch are all mutual reſpects (or relations) of things to each other, &c &c." To the like purpoſe are theſe words, p. 370. "Muſt all intellectual beings be proſcribed out of the order of nature, becauſe they cannot paſs the ſcrutiny of ſenſe? And by the ſame rule all colours be daubed out, becauſe they cannot be heard? All noiſes ſilenced, becauſe they cannot be ſeen? For why may not one ſenſe be ſet to judge of all objects of ſenſe, with far more reaſon, than ſenſe itſelf be ſet to judge over intellectual beings? But yet, it is wiſely done of the atheiſt, to make ſenſe his judge; for, if we once appeal to this, he knows our cauſe is loſt — If God were to be tried by the judgment of ſenſe, he muſt ceaſe to be God; for how can an infinite and ſpiritual Being be diſcerned by the judgment of ſenſe? And if he be not an infinite and ſpiritual being, he is not God."

The rule Mr. Robe mentions about phantaſms, is a ſaying of Ariſtotle, which, as it is miſapplied by lax and libertine philoſophers, is improven, the ſame way with that of Epicurus, above named, out of Lucretius, in favours of thoſe atheiſtical purpoſes; making ſenſes and phantaſms the natural fountains of all our knowledge of truth; and overlooking the Cod

of nature; and not only *holding the truth in unrighteousness*, Rom i. 13. but attempting to erase and destroy that *semen cognitionis Dei*, as Beza on that text calls it, *that seed of the knowledge of God yet remaining in man*. Such an enemy to God is that vain philosophy, that it grudges to own him so far, as to acknowledge the least relic of his image in man; insomuch that, instead of ascribing the original knowledge to that remaining seed of imprisoned truth, and consequently to the God that sowed it in the field of our natural understandings at first; they will rather ascribe all knowledge to the fortuitous concourse of external and internal atoms; I mean, to outward senses, and inward phantasms. *Vain man would be wise; but the world by wisdom knew not God*; and the god of this world hath so blinded the eyes of men with these innumerable atoms of vain imaginations, that they cannot see the God of nature, even in the field of nature; far less can they see him, as the God of glory, in the field of grace. And how much my opponent mixes his best divinity with such vain philosophy, may be evident to all that have any spiritual discerning. I own it is very hard for natural eyes to see any other fountain of knowledge, than what is obvious to the natural senses: But, if a man, being drowned in sense, imagine that sense only gives him knowledge, and that he hath no other principle of knowledge, because he cannot see it, it would argue, he were dreadfully blinded with the atoms of Epicurus; and may as well alledge, that outward objects presented to the eye, give him sight, because his eye that sees these things, cannot see itself. We profanely trace second causes by often overlooking the first.

As I conceive it to be a mistake in *divinity*, relating to the covenant of grace, that many confound the qualities of the covenanted, namely, that they are believing and penitent persons, with the condition of the covenant; and hence make faith and repentance the conditions of it, in a proper sense; while they are only the conditions of order and connection between one blessing of the covenant with another; some other thing, viz. Christ's righteousness, being the proper condition of all the blessings thereof: So I am ready to think it is a mistake in philosophy relating to human understanding, that the other qualities and powers in man, such as sense and imagination, (giving occasion, from external objects, to the understanding to exert itself,) are confounded by many, with the proper cause and fountain of knowledge that is naturally in the rational soul. The seed and root of that knowledge of truth which God has sown there, springs up, as it were, thro' *that gross earth*, which is mistaken for the mother and cause *of it*: Whereas the natural order and connection of inferior

ſenſitive faculties, occaſioning the exerciſe and increaſe of natural knowledge, ought not to be blended with the proper cauſe and fountain of human underſtanding; otherwiſe we open the door to atheiſts, to aſcribe that to mere outward cauſes which ought to be aſcribed to the God of nature; and to give that honour to the creature that is due to the Creator; or rather, to make creatures, ſenſes, phantaſms, all in all here, and God nothing at all. How much theſe foreſaid rules are abuſed by learned and atheiſtical Rationaliſts to this purpoſe, is well known, and what a handle is given to ſuch by my opponent's way of magnifying natural ſenſes and imaginations, as the great ſources and helps of knowledge, is eaſy to ſee.

I am ſo jealous of the danger profeſſed chriſtians are in, of loſing their way in the thickets of Pagan philoſophy, from which they borrow many dangerous maxims, that I would not *chuſe* even that way of ſpeaking which is very common among ſome chriſtian philoſophers, viz. of ſenſation and reflection, as the fountain of knowledge, Locke on human underſtanding, &c. from whence they ſay all the ideas we can naturally have, do ſpring. And the reaſon why I love not that human underſtanding ſhould be aſcribed to theſe magnified fountains thereof, which appear to me rather as the pipes and conduits through which, than the ſprings from which it flows: The reaſon, I ſay, is, becauſe, as I take ſenſation to be only the natural action of the ſoul as it is ſenſitive, while in the body which it animates, and reflection to be the natural action of the ſoul as it is rational, when it comes to the free and due exerciſe of reaſon: So I think the immediate fountain of theſe actions, is the ſoul endued naturally from heaven with theſe ſenſitive and rational faculties; which, like natural and innate habits, are brought forth to act in due time, according as objects are preſented ſuitable to theſe faculties; that is, things ſenſible, external, and material to the ſenſitive faculty; and things intelligible, to the intellective; giving occaſion to theſe faculties or habits, if I may ſo call them, to act and exert themſelves. Whether this be called ſubjective light, conſiſting in our ability to perceive, diſcern, know, and judge of objects as contradiſtinct from actual knowledge, or whether it be called innate knowledge, in contradiſtinction from acquired, or whatever name elſe it may come under; I take this to be the fountain, root and ſpring of all acquired knowledge; of which none are capable that want this ſeed, this faint remains of the divine image: So faint, ſo ſmall, ſo languid, that I may ſuppoſe it like the tender ſnuke of a candle, when both flame and *fire are extinguiſhed*; yet the remaining ſome or *ſmoke, when brought* within the reach of any other fire c

flame, doth natively catch it, even at some distance; so as set it a burning and flaming again; which it could not do there were no remains at all of the fire and flame about Such is the native power and aptitude of that remaining h and smoke to exert itself, as long as the igneous particles h life and motion, which, whenever fire approaches, is natur prompt and ready to receive it. Thus it is here: So low and deeply buried under the rubbish of corruption our na ral knowledge of God is, that the candle of the Lord wit us is, as it were, quite extinguished both as to the fire flame, and nothing remains but some little heat and smo which yet has so much of the nature of knowledge, as to capable, or apt to receive and take hold of the light that proaches to it. This is all innate, and supposed to be so m the root and source of acquired knowledge, that none at could be acquired without it. And, to ascribe knowledg external causes, without this pre-supposed, to me, appear denying, so far, the divine original of the light of nature

According to this view of matters which I have expres I think it is easy to evade the force of Mr Locke's reasoni anent innate ideas, (though I adopt not these terms,) par ularly concerning God and worship; wherein his philoso seems far enough to oppose and contradict the divinity of apostle Paul, Rom. i. 18, 19. and ii. 14, 15. His reason makes it seem, as if it were very absurd to suppose, "th are innate, impressed truths originally, and before the us reason; and yet, for men to be always ignorant of them, they come to the use of reason, it is, says he, in effect to s that men know and know them not at the same time."* from what is said, the answer is easy, That it can be no m absurd to assert, that all natural knowledge is originally first that divine root above mentioned, through whatever cor real sensation it may actually sprout up, than it is absurd assert, that all trees and plants are first radically in the se through whatever earth and dung they afterwards grow It is true, *actual seeing hath a cause without*, as that same aut elsewhere says. But, tho' this may be granted in regard the external object presented; yet that outward object neither give me sight, if I am blind and want eyes, nor kno ledge, to distinguish that object from another, if I want r son and judgment.

This leads me to what may be a necessary digression furt on this head, touching Mr. Locke's philosophy thereane on human understanding, cap 2. § 21, 22. He alledges, t

* Locke on human understanding, p. 8.

, notions are imprinted in the mind, and yet at the same o say, the mind is ignorant of them, as he exemplifies nts and idiots, is to make the impressions nothing. y, (says he), no proposition can be said to be in the mind it never yet knew, which it was never conscious of: f any one, then, by the same reason, all propositions re true, and the mind is capable of ever assenting to, e said to be in the mind, and to be imprinted." This es on to judge absurd; alledging, that, "if the capac- knowing be the natural impression contended for, thch e truths a man ever comes to know, will by this account ry one of them innate.—No body, I think, ever denied he mind is capable of knowing several truths. The ca- , say they, is innate, the knowledge is acquired. But to what end such contests for certain innate maxims? h can be imprinted on the understanding without being ved, I see no difference there can be between any truths ind is capable of knowing in respect of their original." w, I can see no great strength of reason in all this. things here are reckoned absurd, I think, upon very grounds. I only premise, that his reasoning seems to ed upon a denying, or not owning at all, original per- n of human understanding when God first created man his own image, particularly in the knowledge of him- lf, and then of the creatures; which knowledge could it be of a very extensive and comprehensive nature; and a denying, or not owning that man by his fall has lost mage of God, so as his light is turned to darkness, and owledge to ignorance, and nothing remains except that int seed of natural truth mentioned by the apostle, i. 18. which lies sleeping in that natural capacity of ing truths, until it be awakened by the natural means God, as the God of nature, hath appointed unto actual l knowledge; or restored also by the spiritual means God, as the God of grace, hath appointed unto actual al or saving knowledge; and, consequently, restored, at measure and degree God sees fit, to the knowledge at the mind of man had not only an original capacity of ing, but also actually knew before in its primitive state gity. This restoration came by him *who came to restore e took not away*; and *who was the true light which lighteth man that cometh into the world*, John i. 9. The learned rrowsmith on that text says, here is meant, "(1.) The of reason, John i 4 *In him was life; and the life was the man.* (2) The light of conscience, Prov. xx. 27. The *man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts*

of the belly. The ſpirit is oft put for conſcience: *The things of a man no man knoweth, but the ſpirit of man which is in him*; called the candle of the Lord, becauſe it lights and directs all men. We all, by our fall in Adam, loſt not only our ſupernaturals, but forfeited even our naturals. All the light we had was blown out by that fall: Therefore, what we have now, we owe to Chriſt; the natural light we have, we owe to Chriſt. (3.) The light of the word; (this is ſupernatural) *Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path*, Pſ cxix 105. (4.) The light of grace, (which is alſo ſupernatural): Eph i 8. *The eyes of your underſtanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and the riches of his glory.*" Theſe are ſeveral lights that come from Chriſt beſides the light of the ſun, and the light of glory, that are not here ſpoken of. "Chriſt (ſays he) doth enlighten every man that cometh into the world; but not every man alike. True, they all partake of the light of reaſon, and the light of conſcience: But there is a difference and inequality even in that light; becauſe reaſon and conſcience are in ſome more vigorous than in others. What ſhall we ſay of infants and of idiots? We muſt ſay, even theſe have ſome light from Chriſt; but not like other men. Infants have the light of reaſon, though not the uſe of reaſon: That gift they have from Chriſt. Idiots have the uſe of reaſon in ſome low degree; yea, and of conſcience too, in ſome lower acts; though neither reaſon nor conſcience are ſo vigorous in them, as in other men. The light of the word is not equally diſpenſed to all as appears, Pſ cxlvii 19, 20 &c." To the like purpoſe Charnock, vol. ii. p 514 ſhewing how reaſon is blind in the things of God, ſays, "Man is ſaid to have no more underſtanding in regard of the ſpiritual things of God than a beaſt. Pſ xlix 20.—Corruption, like ſmoke, riſing ſtill from the furnace of that hell in the heart, darkens the heavens from our ſight. There is no knowledge of God man ſince the fall can lay claim to by his own reaſon, without ſome illumination. We know nothing of God by the creatures, but as God ſpreads an inward light upon the mind. In nature there is a manifeſtation *in us*, as well as a manifeſtation *to us*, Rom i 19 yet it is a common illumination."

The original perfection of human underſtanding which Mr Locke ſeems to overlook, his opponent, the author of *Origin Sacra* makes notable mention of, p. 2. "That ſaying of Plato that all knowledge is remembrance and all ignorance forgetfulneſs is a certain and undoubted truth*, if by forgetfulneſs be meant the loſs, and by remembrance the recovery of the

[* *Not upon his, and* Origen's *notion ſucked in from him, of the preexiſtence of ſouls; but,*]

otions and conceptions of things which the mind of man
e had in its pure and primitive ſtate, wherein the under-
ſtanding was the trueſt microcoſm, in which all the beings of
he inferior world were faithfully repreſented, according to
heir true, native and genuine perfections. God created the
oul of man, not only capable of finding out the truth of things,
ut furniſhed him with a ſufficient κριτήριον, or touchſtone, to
iſcover truth from falſhood, by a light ſet up in his under-
ſtanding; which, if he had attended to, he might have ſecu-
ed himſelf from all impoſtures and deceits.—If it belong
o the perfection of the ſenſitive faculties to diſcern what is
leaſant from what is hurtful, it muſt needs be the perfection
f the rational to find out the difference of truth from falſ-
ood.—Therefore man was endued with a large ſtock of
ntellectual knowledge; which is the moſt natural and genu-
ne perfection belonging to his rational being, &c." p. 2.
e ſheweth how it behoved "the ſoul to be created in a clear
nd diſtinct knowledge of God, becauſe of man's immediate
bligation to obedience to him, which muſt neceſſarily ſup-
oſe the knowledge of him whoſe will muſt be his rule: For,
man were not fully convinced, in the firſt moment after his
reation, of the being of him whom he was to obey, his firſt
ork and duty would not have been actual obedience, but a
earch whether there was any ſupreme, infinite, and eternal
eing, or no.—The clear knowledge of God will further
ppear moſt neceſſary to man in his firſt creation if we con-
ider that God created him for this end and purpoſe, to enjoy
converſe and an humble familiarity with himſelf.—Converſe
with God was as natural to him as his being was."

The natural remains of the divine image yet in all men, or
the ſeed of *truth* ſpoken of, Rom i. 18. Mr. Locke quite over-
looks alſo, as not anſwering his ſcheme. Maſtricht, *prodr.
theol* p. 81 ſpeaking of theſe remains of the image of God,
ſays, "Theſe God was pleaſed to leave remaining in man after
the fall, not only that they might be unmerited marks and tok-
ens of his goodneſs and clemency towards us, but alſo that they
might be as it were, the ſeeds from whence the divine image
might afterward bloſſom again, by reſtoring grace; and that
the unbelieving might forever be rendered inexcuſable."

Theſe things being premiſed, I offer my thoughts upon Mr.
Locke's forementioned poſitions, which are like foundations
on which he builds his whole work. To me it ſeems ſtrange
in a philoſopher, to ſuppoſe, that it is abſurd to alledge, that
truths may be imprinted on the underſtanding, and yet not
perceived; *when there ſeems nothing more common in the
experience of mankind*, than that a man who hath the grea-

eſt ſtock of habitual knowledge and underſtanding, t
to many truths; yet, while his body ſleeps or his mi
a muſe about other things, he perceive none of theſe
till the dormant habit be rouſed and raiſed to exerci
new preſentation of theſe truths or objects of know
or even by the appearance of ſuch truths or object
(perſonally) never had the actual view or knowl
before; yet how eaſy is it for the mind, previouſly p
with a ſtock of abilities for diſcerning things n
old, to travel through a new field opened up to it?
greater abſurdity in ſaying, that one may have a ſtoc
ginal or habitual knowledge, though he have no actua
ledge, than to ſay, one may have a ſtock of ſenſes, th
hath no actual ſenſation, or conſciouſneſs of the acts
ciſe of any of his ſenſes; as a child not born, or a r
deep ſleep: Or a natural ſtore of affections ſubject
him, and yet affected with nothing, till occaſions an
appear. One may have a good pair of eyes, and yet
thing till light be given and objects be preſented. N
an improper way of ſpeaking to ſay, a man hath his
ſight, though he be not actually ſeeing. And as little
is it improper to ſay, a man hath underſtanding and
ledge, though he be not actually knowing or perceiv
truths he has the impreſs of in his underſtanding.

I am of the mind, that the univerſal aſſent of mankind
truths, upon their very firſt propoſal to the rational
ſufficient to prove, that this aſſent flows from innate
ples, or from ſubjective light and knowledge; whi
neceſſary in order to all actual objective and acquire
ledge, as inward ſight in the eyes is neceſſary to the ſe
outward light of the ſun. This capacity of ſeeing or
ing what our perfect nature once before knew (I kn
fectly, is ſomething; and ſomething more than the
reaſoning imports. Nor could I allow that all know
acquired by external means any more than I could all
ſight is acquired by the ſun. The light however
cannot ſupply the defect of diſcerning power. And
may ſay, by the by, no wonder that many diſcern not
preternatural light of the word, ſince all men have part
organs, or impaired by their own fault that power
cerning God either by his word or works, which our
originally had.

I own then, that human underſtanding was originally
extenſive as not to be confined to certain innate ma
truths, but extended itſelf truly, though not equally,
therefore, though I could grant, that all truths wh

are knowable by that innate light and capacity, according as the truths are presented, and the capacity fitted; yet I think there is a difference between some truths the mind is capable of knowing, and others, even in respect of their original: For, as I apprehend Adam's knowledge of God in his innocent state, was the root and spring of his extensive knowledge of other things; and his knowledge of the Creator the leading cause and principle of that knowledge and understanding he had anent the creatures: So I think the yet remaining notices and notions we have naturally of a God, and the persuasion of this truth, *That there is a God*, and some other maxims immediately depending thereupon, are so far different from the knowledge we have of other things, as to be more deeply ingraven, as it were. And, so far as men do not fill up the gravings with dung, but suffer them to remain legible, and to be attended unto, so far do they naturally promote the righter knowledge of all other things; because God is the first light, *and in his light we see light*. Which I suppose will hold both in nature and grace: For, in so far as this first light is attended unto and rightly improven, so far all other things seen therein are seen and known to advantage, and in their proper nature. "Man's understanding (says Flavel on the soul) is a faculty of the reasonable soul, by which a man apprehends and judges all intelligible things. The object of it is every being, so far as it is true in itself, and apprehensible by man. Yea, (says he) all souls are created with a capacity of enjoying the infinite and blessed God. They need no other powers, faculties, or capacities, than they are by nature endued with, if these be but sanctified, to make them equally happy with them that are before the throne, and with joy unspeakable behold his blessed face. We pass through the fields, and take up an egg that lies under a clod, and see nothing in it but a little squalid matter; yea, but in that egg is seminally and potentially contained such a melodious lark, as, it may be, at the same time, we see mounting heaven-ward, and singing delicious notes above. So it is here: These powers that are now lodged in despicable bodies on earth, have in their nature a capacity for the same enjoyments and employments with these in heaven. They are beings improvable, by grace, to the highest perfections attainable by any creature."

Mr Locke owns, that none can deny there is a capacity in the mind of knowing several truths. This indeed will deny by name; yet it will not agree with the scheme of mere rationalists to own, that this natural capacity is the ground-work which grows *that seed of truth* sown in every [illegible]

i. 18. that it is a part of the natural remains of the divine image; and that this capacity includes seminally all that subjective knowledge of natural things and truths, out of which actual and acquired knowledge arises. I contend not for the terms *innate ideas*. But, whereas it is owned, the understanding is capable of knowing several truths; why only of several truths? I could allow, as I have said above, that the understanding is capable of knowing all truths, according as they are revealed, and the eye of the understanding opened; even as the eyes of the body are capable of seeing all visible things that are presented to them: And this capacity we call sight, even where there cannot be actual seeing, because of darkness, or sleep, or the like. Thus also the understanding is capable of knowing, not only several things, but all things knowable and intelligible, according as they are revealed, and the eyes of the understanding opened to see them; and this we call knowledge and understanding, even though, before the light shine, and the organs be rightly disposed, the object be not actually known or understood.

On these, and such like accounts, I am not fond of those ways of speaking that seem to confound the external order and procedure of human knowledge with the internal cause and fountain of it, and to trace the conduits, means, or occasions thereof, so as to ascribe a casuality to them, and give a handle to atheistical minds to overlook the first cause and proper fountain thereof. Human understanding hath its rise from no other fountain at first, but infinite understanding in him of whom it is said, Ps. xciv. 9, 10. *He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?* I chuse not to make sensation and reflection the fountain of human understanding; but would rather chuse to say the contrary, that human understanding is the fountain of sensation and reflection; I mean the human soul, which God hath endued with sensitive and intellective powers. And I am afraid, that the vain philosophy that tends to lead people off from this foundation, is the fountain of that Scepticism and Epicurism, that Atheism and Deism, that abounds so much in the present age.

But, as Dr Stillingfleet, speaking of that hypothesis of the late famous French philosopher, Des Cartes, wherein he undertakes to give an account of the original of the universe, from the mere mechanical laws of matter and motion, "Tho' (says he) there be as much reason as charity, to believe he never intended his hypothesis as a foundation of atheism, having made it so much his business to assert the existence of a *Deity, and immateriality* of the soul; yet it is apt to be abus-

d to that end, by perſons atheiſtically diſpoſed, becauſe of his aſcribing ſo much to the power of matter:" So I may ſay of ſome late philoſophers, as well as ancient ones, eſpecially thoſe of the chriſtian denomination, that, whatever reaſon there is to believe, that they never intended their hypotheſes relating to human knowledge, as a foundation of Atheiſm, having made it ſo much their buſineſs to aſſert the exiſtence of a Deity, and to acknowledge God the ſovereign author and diſpoſer of all things; yet, to me it would ſeem, their hypotheſes are moſt apt to be abuſed to that end, by perſons atheiſtically diſpoſed, becauſe of their aſcribing ſo much to the power of ſenſation: For they ſeem to make the moſt exalted knowledge that men can naturally have, to ariſe only from that reflection which ariſes from ſenſation, or the impreſſion that outward objects make upon the organs of ſenſe. This ſcheme gratifies the carnal mind of ſenſual men that were deeply enough immerſed into ſenſe, and thoughtleſs of that God in whom they live, and move, and have their being; and who, as the Father of ſpirits, has given them rational and immortal ſouls, endued naturally with theſe ſenſitive and intellective faculties, that are the remains of the divine image, and the fountain of all natural knowledge.

We read, Rom ii. 14. of the light of nature, and of the *Gentiles that have not the law, their doing by nature the things of the law.* "This light and law of nature, (ſays Burgeſs in his *Vindiciæ legis*, lect 7) conſiſts partly in light and knowledge of ſpeculative principles, and partly in practice, and obedience to practical principles.—It is the relic and remnant of the image of God. For, howſoever the image of God did primarily conſiſt in righteouſneſs and true holineſs; yet ſecondarily it did alſo comprehend the powers and faculties of the reaſonable ſoul in the acts thereof; and this latter part abides.—— There remains in man ſome light ſtill, which the apoſtle, Rom i calls truth; he vouchſafes that name to it, they *held the truth in unrighteouſneſs.*" To this purpoſe many divines ſhew, how far the image of God is loſt, and how far it remains; (as, *Urſin. opera de creatione hominis, tom. i p. 558. Amerpoel, Carteſius Muſaizans. p. 245. Maſtricht, prodrom. p. 82, &c.*) Among the remaining parts of that image are reckoned, even in natural and unregenerate men, (1.) The incorporeal, rational, inviſible, and immortal ſubſtance of the ſoul, with its powers. (2.) Many notices in the mind, of God, of nature, of the difference of things honeſt and vile; (which notices) are the principles of arts. (3.) Certain veſtiges and ſeeds of moral virtues, &c. The learned Dr. Owen, on the Spirit p 569 ſays, "There are ſome general commands, I acknow-

ledge, ſo clear in the light of nature, as that no queſtion can be made, but that what is required in them, is our duty to perform; ſuch are they, That God is to be loved: That others are not to be injured*: That every one's right is to be rendered to him; whereunto all reaſonable creatures do aſſent at their firſt propoſal. And, where any are found to live in an open neglect, or ſeem to be ignorant of them, their degeneracy into beſtiality is open, and their ſentiments not at all to be regarded." The great Calvin, in his *Inſtitutions*, lib. i. c. 3. § 3. ſays, "it is evident to all who have a right judgment, that there is engraven into the minds of men the ſenſe of a Deity, which can never be deleted; yea, that this perſuaſion, *That there is ſome God*, is naturally inbred, and ſo deeply fixed in the very heart, that nature itſelf ſuffers none to forget it."

To this purpoſe it is ſaid, Origines Sacræ, p. 367 ſpeaking of the notion of a Deity, "That it is hard to pitch on any other notion which has fewer entanglements in it, to a mind ſo far metaphyſical, as to abſtract from ſenſe and prejudice. I grant it is very difficult, nay impoſſible, for thoſe to have any true ſettled notion of a God, who ſearch for an idea of him in their fancies, and were never conſcious to themſelves of any higher faculty in their ſouls, than mere imagination. Such may have *imaginem Jovis*, or *galeatæ Minervæ*, as he in Tully ſpeaks; ſome idea of an idol in their minds, but none of the true God."

Whatever veſtiges of God, and natural notices of him, remain yet in the minds of men; yet ſuch is the dreadful degeneracy and corruption of man's nature ſince the fall, that not only the groſly ignorant and illiterate world of mankind are willing to forget God, and ly buried in the duſt of earthlineſs and carnality; but alſo the learned world, being the ſame way corrupted, do generally abuſe their learning and parts, while not ſanctified by grace, to the further overthrow of religion, and increaſe of Atheiſm, by employing the noble faculties and reaſon that God has given them, not to the glory and honour of that God, but rather in mighty attempts to blot out, if poſſible, the remembrance of his name in the world, and bury it under the duſt and rubbiſh of ſenſes and phantaſms: About which, rules of philoſophy are now a-days cited, as if they were rules of divinity; and as if the ſpeculation of phantaſms were any way concerned in, or helpful to the knowledge of God and Chriſt, in order to ſalvation: While

*Cicero, a heathen, aſſerted a great truth, *Hominem naturæ obedientem homini nocere non poſſe*: i. e. A man obedient to the law of nature cannot *hurt a man.*

yet moſt of theſe, and ſuch like philoſophical ſpeculations, both ancient and modern, are but fruits and effects of God's wrath againſt a learned atheiſtical world, expreſſed Rom. i. 21, 22, 23, 25, 24, 28. *Becauſe that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools: And changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man.—Who changed the TRUTH of God into a lie;* that is, ſay ſome, either the God of Truth, or the true God, into an idol, which is a lie; or the true ſentiments and notions they had of God; and were taught them, verſe 18, 19, 20 by the light of nature, and the book of the creature; theſe they changed into lying imaginations and conceits. *For this cauſe God gave them up to vile affections.—And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind*; or, as it is in the margin, *a mind void of judgment.* And ſome, becauſe they received not the love of the truth, God ſent them *ſtrong delusions*, that they ſhould *believe a lie.* 2 Theſſ. ii. 10, 11. How the foreſaid rule about phantaſms can ſuit the ſubject relating to the knowledge of God in Chriſt, may eaſily appear to any that conſider, that there can be no greater oppoſites than theſe two, namely, the natural fancies or imaginations of man, and the knowledge of God and Chriſt. Men's proud thoughts, yea, natural reaſonings and high imaginations, exalt themſelves againſt the knowledge of God, and cannot be overthrown, but by *the weapons that are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of theſe ſtrong holds of Satan*, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. *The carnal mind* or wiſdom of the fleſh, *is enmity againſt God*, Rom. viii. 7. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: For they are foolishneſs to him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. If the very *wiſdom* and underſtanding of the *wiſe and prudent of this world* muſt be deſtroyed, and brought to nothing, 1 Cor. i. 19, 20 to make way for the knowledge of God and Chriſt; it were ſtrange, to think that notions and phantaſms could be helpful to it.

Though the thought and impreſs of a Deity is natural to all, as hath been ſaid, ſo as none can baniſh utterly from himſelf this thought, *That there is a God*; yet all have loſt this knowledge of God, that was the glory of man in his creation. "The eye is born, (ſays Charnock, vol. ii. p. 442.) quite blind to ſpiritual, but purblind only to natural knowledge. God, in his exact ſearch in the world after its pollution, found not a man but was as ignorant as he was corrupt, Pſal. xiv. 2, 3. *And the apoſtle expounds* it as a charge againſt the whole

world, Jews and Gentiles, Rom. iii. 9, 10, 11: We are no more born with the saving knowledge of God in our heads and hearts, than with skill in philosophy and mathematics; no, nor so much; for we bring into the world a faculty capable of them by ordinary instruction, but incapable of the other without special illumination. 'Tis as possible (says the same author) to read the law in tables of stone, after they are pounded to dust, as to read true notions of God and Christ in lapsed nature, Eph. iv. 17, 18. *Ibid*, p. 442. "This natural ignorance of men under the gospel is wilful; many have no desire to know what they ought to know of God, that their conscience may not press them to do what they know.—That knowledge which is the ornament of the soul, they account the torment of their conscience.—The understanding and natural wisdom is employed in any vile service, rather than inquiries after God; and with more delight entertains a natural discovery, than a divine revelation.—The natural notions of God men are not willing to cherish; they would raze out the engraven letters: But, since they are so deeply impressed as not to be obliterated, they fill the characters with dirt; keep them by unrighteousness from being legible, that they may be secure in the practice of their unworthy principles, Rom. i. 28. *They like not to retain God in their knowledge*.—The imaginations which lift up themselves against the knowledge of Christ, are are the darlings; a mighty unwillingness to have them pulled down, and razed to the ground, 2 Cor. x. 5, 6.

As the same author says elsewhere, that a man may be theologically knowing, and yet spiritually ignorant; so I may say, a man may be philosophically knowing, and yet theologically ignorant. Though Mr. Locke's philosophy be not universally approven, yet many will acknowledge he was a learned philosopher. But sound divines will soon see how he bewrayed his ignorance of divinity, especially in making no light, evidence, or knowledge, superior to natural; which he makes threefold, viz. sensitive, rational, and intuitive. By this last he means that whereby we know our own existence, and which he calls self evidence. It is said also in his book on human understanding, p. *(mihi)* 394. "Traditional revelation, (and, by the bye, we have no other) may make one know propositions knowable also by reason; but not with the same certainty that reason doth." And elsewhere he asserts, "That, to talk of any other light in the mind, besides that of reason, self-evidence, and sense, is to put ourselves in the dark."—*On these* accounts the learned and pious Professor Haly burton *examines* and refutes his gross opinion, (Essay concerning the

reaſon of faith, p. 122. &c) at conſiderable length. Mr Iſaac Chauncy, in his Catechiſm, p. 252. to that queſtion, *Whence ariſeth infallibility of aſſurance?* Anſwers, *Only from infallible evidence, which is divine teſtimony; whence the demonſtration of the ſpirit is more infallible, than all that ariſeth from ſenſe or reaſon,* Cor ii 4 Rom iii 4 Prov xxx. 6. 1 John v. 10. Num. xxiii. 9. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Heb. vi 18.

As Mr. Locke has the word of God, the ſacred oracles, ſtanding againſt his principles, ſo he ſeems ſometimes to glory in ſetting himſelf directly in oppoſition to ſound divines and philoſophers that have gone before him. I have not had occaſion to conſult Mr. Henry Lee, or any other that write againſt him directly, beſide the learned profeſſor Halyburton above named. But, though none ought to follow the opinions of other men except in ſo far as found agreeable to the word of God; yet the producing examples from others, (as the learned Toſſanus ſays,) gives not only delight, but authority and credit to a man's diſcourſe. Therefore, beſides what I have ſaid, I give my judgment in oppoſition to the above aſſertions of Mr. Locke, in the words of ſome great authors. Charnock, on this head, may be the more noticed, that he is owned to be a great philoſopher as well as a divine; and as remote from enthuſiaſm, as Mr. Locke; yet how oppoſite to his unſcriptural ſentiments, may appear from vol. ii. p. 435. "This teaching (ſays he) is by the Spirit, John xvi 17. 1 John ii. 27. who inwardly preſents the excellencies of God and Chriſt to the underſtanding, as the word doth to the ear; and that not like a flaſh of lightning that gives a vaniſhing light, and leaves us in a worſe darkneſs than it found us; but he abides as a Spirit of truth.—It is his demonſtration; and, therefore, powerful, 1 Cor. ii 4 and ſurer than any demonſtration by reaſon, by how much the teacher is above all the reaſon in the world. It is the *Spirit* that *ſearches the deep things of God*, 2 Cor. ii 9, 10. myſteries above the ken of corrupted reaſon, and hid in the ſecret place of the Moſt High —Since therefore, this knowledge is a fruit of divine teaching, and from an infinitely wiſe and infallible teacher, the ſoul of a believer is more aſſured of the reality of it, than it is of its own life and being. He knows by ſenſe and reaſon that he lives; but the knowledge that he has of God and Chriſt, is by the Spirit, a principle infinitely ſuperior to both the other." To this purpoſe is that of the learned Davenant. in Coloſſ p. 212. "No power can do any thing againſt itſelf, or above itſelf. Human underſtanding, therefore, by itſelf cannot believe; *whence it is neceſſary*, that it be enlightened with a more *powerful light*, and a more powerful illumination. In this

light then, the understanding both conceives the proposition which is believed, and at the same time sees the formal reason why it should be believed: But this reason is no medium or mean either demonstrative or scientific; but just the divine authority; for faith infused shews to the understanding that doctrine which is believed, to have come from God." Another great philosopher * says, "Human understanding hath not any medium by which it can evidently know things that are supernatural; because they have not a cause in nature, by which they can be known; for so they would not be supernatural. Hence, no mysteries of faith are to nature evidently known, though yet they are certain, firm, and infallible; because divine revelation, by which they are known, is void of all error, and cannot consist with falsehood. Yea, (says he,) if the mysteries of faith could be evidently known by human understanding, then they might be known by infidels; nor would faith be necessary; nor would it be the substance and evidence of things not seen, but of things that are seen; contrary to the nature and description of faith, which God himself has given in his holy word."

From all which it may appear, not only how vain, venomous, and vitious that philosophy is, which, misimproving and misapplying scholastic axioms and theorems, sets up human sense and natural reason against divine faith and revealed religion; but also how impertinently and absurdly Mr. Robe's philosophical rule about the speculation of phantasms, is adduced upon such a theological subject, as that of the knowledge of God and Christ; as if these were necessary and helpful to this knowledge. How opposite such doctrine is to the word of God, and to the solid divinity and sound philosophy above quoted, readers may judge. Whatever truth that rule may import, as it relates to the natural knowledge of natural and corporeal things; yet it has no relation at all to objects of saving faith or spiritual knowledge, except such a relation as darkness hath to light. But, lest any think Mr. Robe here misrepresented, I own, he seems to adduce that rule only in support of his darling maxim about the necessity of an imaginary idea of Christ as man, unto the faith of his being God-man in one person, and so may be supposed to adduce it pertinently enough; because here is a corporeal object, that cannot be known or conceived without a corporeal phantasm. But this fancy of Christ as man is indeed but a fancy, that pertains neither to the act nor the object of faith; for *as faith in God centers in his Deity; so faith in Christ centers in his person*†

* *Heerboord*, disp. p. 170. † Charnock, vol. II. p. 1171.

And to form an imaginary idea of the manhood, is no idea at all of the perſon God-man; which, being a ſpiritual and ſupernatural object, cannot poſſibly be the ſubject of an imaginary idea: For, ſeeing Chriſt as man is no perſon, and in his perſon no man, to have an imaginary idea of *God-man*, or of that perſon *as man*, is a mere contradiction, both to philoſophy and divinity, reaſon and religion. And therefore, unleſs Mr. Robe were to ſhew, that the object of faith is a corporeal object, and that the glorious perſon of Chriſt is to be known by the help of corporeal phantaſms, the rule which he adopts, viz. *Oportet intelligentem phantaſmata ſpeculari*, muſt be quite overthrown; and an oppoſite one more ſuitable put in place of it, namely, *Oportet intelligentem phantaſmata ſupprimere, ſubvertere, ſubruere*; that is, inſtead of gazing into the glaſs of images and airy phantaſms, where men ſee nothing but ſhadows, they may look into the glaſs of goſpel-truths and divine revelation, where faith will find ſolid footing.

SECT. IV.

I proceed now to offer remarks upon more of Mr Robe's letter. Mr. Robe ſays, p. 34. "This is what we affirm: that we may and ſhould think upon Chriſt as man, and in his human nature; and that we cannot think of him really, as he is God and man without this, (viz. an imaginary idea of him as man): And it is what, to my great ſurpriſe, both of you deny;" (meaning Mr. Fiſher and Mr. Erſkine). *Anſ.* It ſhould be no ſurpriſe to any man to hear, that, when we think of Chriſt really as he is, God-man in one perſon, our thoughts ought to be real and religious, not imaginary and idolatrous; that we ought not to think of him as an object of ſenſe and fancy, a corporeal object, but believingly, as he is the object of faith; not viewing his human nature any other way, but as it ſubſiſts in his divine perſon: Which cannot be done by an imaginary idea. If Mr Fiſher and I thus ſee and think of Chriſt's human nature by faith and ſpiritual knowledge, we will not envy Mr. Robe's ſight of it by phantaſms and imaginary ideas.

"The queſtion, ſays he, *(ibid.)* between you and me, is not, If we may think upon, and have an imaginary idea of Jeſus Chriſt as a mere man, or as man ſimply, to uſe Mr Erſkine's words; for this is agreed upon all hands, we may not, &c." *Anſwer.* What he here ſays is agreed on all hands, can never be agreed to by any that know what they are ſaying. An imaginary idea, as Mr Robe ſays many times, hath no other object *but what is merely* corporeal; And therefore it is with

abhorrence I repeat his words about an imaginary idea of ſus Chriſt; which idea according to himſelf, can make I think of no more but a mere human body; and conſequen cannot conceive of ſo much as even a mere man; for a m man is ſomewhat more than a mere body, or corporeal thi Yet Mr. Robe ſays, we may not have an imaginary ide Jeſus Chriſt as a mere man. And thus he now makes ſo thing more than a mere man to be the object of that id If my reader have eyes in his head, he cannot miſs to here a heap of mere contradictions. Again, he ſays, in t ſame paragraph, that an imaginary idea of Chriſt as ma ſometimes neceſſary, uſeful, and profitable to our ... knowledge of him, and uſe making of him as Mediator. If it ſometimes neceſſary, this ſeems to ſuppoſe it is not always But this is inconſiſtent with what he ordinarily ſays throu his letter, that it is ſo abſolutely neceſſary, that it is impo ble to conceive of Chriſt aright without it. I may here remark on the beginning of this paragraph of his, that, if imaginary idea can conceive of Chriſt no other way, but beſt as a mere man, or a man ſimply, and yet Mr. Robe ov we may not conceive of him ſo, that is, it is not lawful, ſinful; then he proves, to my hand, that all imaginary id of Chriſt as man are unlawful, and conſequently uſeleſs unprofitable: Which ought to be abhorred and abandoned all that would believe in him, and make uſe of him as Me ator, God man.

"The queſtion, ſays he, (*ib.*) is not whether conceivin Jeſus Chriſt, or having an imaginary idea of him as man, faith, or any part of faith; for this we never aſſerted it to and we are agreed that it is not." Remark, (1.) Here Robe, (as many times elſewhere) makes conceiving of Ch the ſame with having an imaginary idea of him as man. theſe I utterly deny to be the ſame; for we may conce Chriſt by faith to be what he truly is, namely God-man; wh no imaginary idea can do. It cannot ſo much as conceiv his manhood, as it imports his being a rational intellect creature: Nay, that idea forms only in the mind but a f image of his true body, as true; becauſe, as Mr. Robe hi ſelf elſewhere declares, that idea can have no object but w is corporeal. It can riſe no higher, to judge of what is t or not true. This belongs to a ſuperior faculty. (2.) Si Mr. Robe will have the object of his imaginary idea to b part of the object of faith, why ſhould he here be obliged *own this*, that it is neither faith nor any part of it; nay, *objectively*. Why then, he ſeems to declare himſelf of

my opinion unawares, though he be fighting againſt it; namely, That that cannot be any part of the object of faith which is perceptible by every man's fancy, &c. But yet this opinion he will oppoſe, becauſe he cannot believe in a God man without the fancy of a man, or of a human body; and yet this fancy, as it relates to this object, is no part of faith, either actively or objectively: Which ſeems to make him neither of my opinion, nor of his own. But of this more elſewhere.

In this ſame 34th page he pretends to open up an amazing ſcene in the following words: "Allow me (ſays he) then to open up an extraordinary and amazing ſcene to the reader, in preſenting him with a few citations from ſome of our principal divines, aſſerting all I have ſaid, as the great, neceſſary and comfortable truths of the glorious goſpel, and, conſequently, your oppoſite propoſitions, as falſe and heretical.—This may poſſibly let well meaning people into your management, and convince them how ready you are to caſt up the moſt ſacred truths, to maintain your ſchiſm, and may poſſibly prevent ſome being led into hereſy by your poſitions and reaſonings." Remark. Sure ſomething very extraordinary is to follow, and Mr. Robe's opinion is to be confirmed to a demonſtration; and our ſchiſm, hereſy, and falſhood, muſt be expoſed, and a ſwatch of Mr. Robe's inſight into the truths of the glorious goſpel, by the conſonancy of his doctrine with that of famous divines. What pity is it, if, notwithſtanding all this confidence, his authorities fail him, ſo far as to make quite againſt him!

"The firſt I ſhall preſent you with, (ſays he p. 35.), is a paſſage from the late learned and godly Mr Rutherford's letters:——*I know God is taſten (if I may ſpeak ſo) in a ſweet mould and lovely image, in the perſon of that heaven's jewel the* MAN CHRIST; *and that the ſteps of that ſteep aſcent and ſtair to the Godhead, is the fleſh of Chriſt, the new and living way:* And there is footing for faith in that curious ark of the HUMANITY: *Therein dwelleth the Godhead married upon our humanity, &c.*" Theſe words of Mr Rutherford Mr. Robe cites in oppoſition to mine, wherein I contended againſt his imaginary idea of Chriſt as man. And ſo ſtrange is my antagoniſt's blindneſs, that he does not ſee how Mr. Rutherford's words refute that imaginary doctrine as much as I do. I could ſeek no better witneſs againſt Mr. Robe's mental image of Chriſt in the brain, than theſe very words he cites and marks with a different character, as favouring his imaginary notions. Mr Rutherford ſays there is footing for faith in that curious ark of the humanity: But does he ſay, there is footing, *for fancy or any imaginary idea?* Nay ſays he, in that ark

dwells the Godhead married upon our humanity. It is pl
Mr Rutherford here meant the hypostatic union between
divine and human nature. And will Mr. Robe say, that t
can be the object of an imaginary idea? or can he form in
head the image of an ark wherein the Godhead dwelle
Nay, there is no footing here, as Mr. Rutherford says,
for faith. Again, what image can Mr. Robe form in his h
of the steps of that stair to the Godhead, namely, the flesh
Christ; the new and living way? Is that new and living w
consecrated through the vail of Christ's flesh, a corporeal
ject for an imaginary idea? or is Christ's human body, t
new and living way? Is not Christ, as God-man Mediat
that new and living way? Can that which is declared to
footing for faith, be cited with judgment, as if it were a fo
ing for fancy and imaginary ideas? Indeed Mr. Rutherfor
words are more spiritual than that any of them can be
object of a corporeal or sensitive idea: Nay, they seem
transcend Mr. Robe's intellectuals, as well as his corpor
powers; otherwise he would never have dreamed that
imaginary ideas had any footing here. Would he think
were speaking judiciously, if I should say, that he cannot
lieve that the flesh of Christ is a stair to the Godhead, with
an imaginary idea of material steps of a stair; nor beli
that the Godhead dwells in the curious ark of his humani
without an imaginary idea of a material ark? With as lit
judgment does he suppose, that none can believe in Christ, t
God man through whose flesh, or human nature, as a vail,
new and living way is consecrate, without an imaginary id
of material flesh, a material veil, and a human body. It
true, it may be alledged, the former are only metapho
resemblances but the body of Christ is a real body. It is
But then, the things from which the metaphors are tak
namely, a stair and an ark, are material things, as well
flesh is a material thing; and they are all equally the obj
of an imaginary idea: And not one material or corpor
thing more than another, can be the proper object of fai
but only of sense and fancy.

But it would seem Mr Robe lays most stress upon Mr Ru
therford's words which he puts forth in capital letters, wh
speaking of our Redeemer, and calling him the MAN CHRI
But is is possible Mr Robe can dream, that this was me
of Christ's human nature, or human body as it is the object
an imaginary idea? when yet the words are about the *per*
of that heavenly jewel, *the Man Christ*; whose person, M
Robe owns, cannot be the object of any such idea. Yet
cites my words in opposition to Mr. Rutherford's sense

ds, and then terms mine horrible propoſitions; adding, low do theſe agree with what he ſaid, That the ſteps of steep aſcent and ſtair to the Godhead is the fleſh of Chriſt, new and living way; and there is footing for faith in that ous ark of the humanity? Is this to be a help or hinder- to faith? Is this to be no part of the object of faith? v do they agree with what he ſays of caſting his love firſt n the *Man Chriſt?*" Here Mr. Rutherford adds the rea- which Mr. Robe does not, in the reſuming thereof, name- "I ſhould ſee all the three bleſſed perſons through him." ich explains his words quite away, yea, infinitely remote all Mr. Robe's imaginary ideas; which ſtill he thinks Rutherford's words favour, becauſe he deſigns our Re- mer, the *Man Chriſt*. Hence Mr Robe comes three times that title in big letters; therefore I muſt offer ſome rks further upon it.

Mr. Robe boaſts of what he has advanced about an imagin- idea, as if it were ſome part of the great, neceſſary, and ſortable truth of the glorious goſpel, and, conſequently, opinion falſe and heretical: Whereas indeed I never had n a ſwatch of a miniſter's ignorance of the goſpel, and ig- ance of the meaning of his own words. Here notice, (1) Rutherford ſpeaks of the man Chriſt, but Mr. Robe ſpeaks Chriſt as man: And yet Mr. Robe fancies that Mr. Ruther- ſpeaks as he does. But theſe two differ as much as heaven ers from earth, and God from man. This I ſhall make n, I think, to the capacity of any child ſix years old. riſt being the name of a perſon, and particularly the perſon our Redeemer God-man, the *man Chriſt is God*; but Chriſt *man is not God*: The man Chriſt is a perſon; but Chriſt as n is no perſon. This I ſhall further make evident. The n Chriſt is the object of faith and adoration; but Chriſt as n is a creature, neither the object of faith nor worſhip.) I here aſſert, That the man Chriſt is God; becauſe the ipture declares, that our Redeemer, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ng the eternal Son of God, became man, and ſo is God man- ked in the fleſh. (2.) I aſſert, That Chriſt as man is not d; which is as great a truth, as when I aſſert, that Chriſt God is not man. Even ſo Chriſt as man is not God: be- iſe he hath two diſtinct natures, the divine and human, ich cannot be confounded. (3) I aſſert, That the man riſt is a perſon; becauſe he who is the man Chriſt is God, ſecond perſon of the glorious Trinity. (4) I aſſert, That riſt as man is not a perſon; becauſe, if he were a perſon as n, and a perſon as God alſo, he would have two perſons:

But he is God and man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever. It is plain, the *man Christ* then is God: But Christ *as man* is not God, but a creature of the human kind; for Christ, the second Adam, was as truly made of a woman, as the woman at first was truly made of a man. It is plain also the man Christ is a person; but Christ as man is no person but a nature, not divine, but human. Hence it follows, that to have a natural conception and imaginary idea of Christ as man, is to conceive of a thing that is neither God nor a person, but a mere human creature, that is no person, no God. And to make this the object of faith and worship, is gross idolatry. The man Christ is the anointed Son of God, our glorious Redeemer, the only object of saving faith: But Christ as man, and the imaginary idea of him as man, being an idea of his human body as such, this human body, as such, is the object of sense; and can no more in itself, or as such, be the object of faith, than any other human body can be.

How much then Mr. Rutherford's doctrine differs from Mr. Robe's may be evident to all who read what Mr. Robe himself here cites; and how near to my doctrine, may be further evident from Mr Rutherford's words elsewhere, in a treatise of his upon Matth. ix 27,—31. intitled, *The power and prevalence of faith and prayer*; where, p 16. he says, "Every man naturally born of a woman hath a personship of his own, and subsisteth by himself: But God, assuming man's nature, took the nature, but assumed not man's personship; for then he behoved to lay aside his own personship, and assume our person. But it was not good that Christ should lay aside any thing that he had from eternity. We had need of his person in the mediation between God and us.—It was the Godhead that only could make his blood to be the blood of God, and perfume it with infinite merit" P. 17. "If Christ had kept his own personality, and also assumed ours, Christ should have been two persons, two sons, two saviours.—Now, man's nature subsisteth personally with the nature of the Son of God in the subsistence and personship of the Son of God." P. 13. "This is the greatest wonder in heaven, (Isa. xliii. 11, *I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour*; there is but one.) That man is made the same I and person with God, not formally but in union. There is but one single I, one personship between both the Godhead and the manhood; but that is a strong one." P. 19 "Angels think it their new heaven, 1 Pet. i. 12. above their old heaven, to draw aside the curtain, to look into this wonder of glory.—The essence and nature of God do *not simply*, as nature, assume the manhood, for then should

e Father and the Holy Ghoſt (which have the very ſame na-
re, and no other, with the Son) have been incarnate; but
e nature, as perſonalized in the Son only, did aſſume our
ture." Mr. Rutherford here expreſſes the myſtery of
riſt's humanity, as I have done elſewhere in other words:
id Mr. Robe may try, if there be any footing for fancy here;
r, in the words he cited, Mr. Rutherford told him there was
ly footing for faith. May the dagon of fancy fall down
adlong before the ark of God. It is ſaid of queen Eliſabeth,
at, paſſing the ſtreets, and ſeeing ſome of her pictures hang
r ſigns that were not made like her, ſhe was angry, and
ſed them to be pulled down, and thrown into the fire.
rrowſmith on John i p. 57.) The picture of Chriſt formed
the brain by an imaginary idea, is no ways like him; and
erefore muſt be pulled down and deſtroyed.

"The ſecond paſſage (ſays Mr Robe, p. 36.) is from the
rned Charnock; where, ſpeaking of this very ſubject, im-
inary ideas, vol. i. p. 124 ſhewing that we muſt by no
ans conceive of God under a human or corporeal ſhape, he
th, We may indeed conceive of Chriſt as man, who hath in
aven the veſtment of our nature, and is *Deus figuratus*, tho'
e cannot conceive the Godhead under a human ſhape."
mark. This expreſſion of Charnock ſeems to anſwer Mr.
obe's purpoſe; yet in reality it does not, if the following
ings be conſidered. (1.) There is no word here of an im-
inary idea of Chriſt as man; which idea can have nothing
its object but a human body; and ſo not even Chriſt as
an, that is, his whole human nature; far leſs can it have
riſt as God-man; of whom Charnock ſpeaks of under the
me of *Deus figuratus*; that is, an incarnate God, or God in
nature, and ſo of the perſon of Chriſt denominate from
manhood, as all other divines uſe to do: And, though he
aks of Chriſt's human nature, or of Chriſt as man; yet it
not as that is the object of an imaginary idea, but as that
an is a perſon, who hath in heaven the veſtment of our na-
e. Thus the view Charnock hath of Chriſt as man, includes
iew of his whole perſon; and ſo is a rational and ſcriptural
ew; which Mr. Robe's is not. (2.) When Charnock ſays,
e may conceive of Chriſt as man, though we cannot conceive the
odhead under a human ſhape; though it ſuppoſes we may, yea
d cannot but conceive of his manhood under a human ſhape
form; yet it no way ſuppoſes that what we thus conceive
der a human ſhape, is the object of faith: Nay, ſo far from
is, *that Charnock himſelf*, in that diſcourſe, ſhews, that all
orporeal things are no other but the objects of ſenſe and fan-
. *And hence, though* he ſeems to go further than ſome

other philoſophers in giving Mr. Robe a handle to his imaginary doctrine, from his aſſerting that our knowledge and thoughts of the moſt ſpiritual things is ſo much by the help of corporeal repreſentations; yet it may be eaſily gathered from Charnock's diſcourſe, that the helpfulneſs he ſpeaks of is only objective, accidental, and occaſional, as Heeriboord and De Vries explain that point; which I have ſhewn elſewhere in this tract. Yet Charnock here is ſo far from ſuppoſing, that the fancy and imaginary notion of Chriſt under a human ſhape belongs to the object of faith, or ſpiritual knowledge, that he plainly enough intimates, that it does not ſo much as belong to rational knowledge; and therefore ſays, p. 125. "That, though there will be ſtill ſome dregs of matter ſticking to our conceptions, yet we ſtill judge by arguments and reaſoning, what the things are we think of under theſe material images." Then he cites Nazianzen, ſaying, "A corporeal image will follow us, as a ſhadow does the body, as long as we are in the body, and ſurrounded with fleſhly matter, &c. ſo that there is a natural inclination to figure nothing but under a corporeal notion, till, by an attentive application of the mind and reaſon to the object thought upon, we ſeparate that which is bodily from that which is ſpiritual, &c." And then concludes that paragraph by ſaying, *Therefore what is offered by our fancy, ſhould be purified by our reaſon.* To which I add, that what is offered by fancy and reaſon, ſhould be purified by faith. Now, from what Charnock ſays, it appears, that what Mr. Robe makes the object of his imaginary idea, is not the object of rational knowledge, far leſs is it the object of faith.

I ſhall help Mr. Robe to a paſſage in Charnock that ſeems much more to his purpoſe, than any citation he has taken from him, vol. ii. p. 476. "There is alſo (ſays he) a diſcovery of God in the *face* of Chriſt. Since the divine nature falls not under the perception of ſenſe, nor can be immediately known in itſelf by the underſtandings of men, it ſhines forth and ſparkles in the face of Chriſt, and diffuſes itſelf about the world. (Then he cites Gerhard, ſaying,) By knowing Chriſt who is man, we know God; becauſe the human nature is perſonally aſſumed by the Son of God. As he that ſees the body of a man, ſees the man conſiſting of ſoul and body, becauſe the ſoul and body are united together, and make one compoſition; though the ſoul in itſelf be inviſible; ſo he that ſees the human nature of Chriſt, is rightly ſaid to ſee God, becauſe the human and divine nature are perſonally united in Chriſt, though *the divinity* in itſelf be inviſible. And indeed we cannot *conceive* any other ſight and knowledge of God in heaven, but *in Chriſt.* The viſion of Chriſt in his glorified human nature

is a seeing of God face to face. So that whosoever sees Christ with his bodily eyes, or with the eyes of his mind, sees God; he sees and knows God, not immediately and directly, but mediately and consequently" I see no passage could have been so pat for Mr Robe as this: And yet it will not quadrate with his doctrine, relating to the imaginary idea of Christ as man, that is, of his human body; because, when Charnock here speaks of seeing God in the face of Christ, he means the person of Christ, as he shows in the page preceding; where also, speaking of Philip's ignorance in saying, John xiv. 9. *Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*, implying, that he was to be seen with corporeal eyes, and of Christ's answer with a reproof, *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*, he adds, "The Son hath rendered the Father spiritually visible in his person; his excellency, majesty, and inexpressible kindness to man shine forth in Christ as a lively and clear image, &c.—Christ God-man is the image of God—His humanity abstractly considered was no more the image of God, than Adam was by creation: And he is so the image of God, that whosoever hath seen him and known him, hath seen and known the Father also: Which cannot be said of a picture; for he that sees a picture, cannot be said to see the object represented by the picture, which expresses only the outward figure, form, and lineaments; (and thus far only, I add, goes the imaginary idea;) but he is such an image as represents the nature, features, attributes, and inward virtues of God. A picture is but a shadow; but Christ is a substantial image of God, wherein the Divinity dwells bodily, Col ii 9" There needs no plainer words against Mr. Robe's imaginary doctrine: And yet more plain to me seems the same Charnock's words, p. 498. "He that spiritually knows the Son, knows the Father, John xiv. 9. not he that sees Christ *corporeally*, for then the unbelieving Pharisees might be said to see the Father; nor he that sees Christ *intellectually*, for then mere christian Notionalists may be said to see the Father; but he that sees Christ *spiritually*, with a *knowledge of faith*, knows the Father; for the majesty and bounty of God shine in Christ as an exact image." Here Mr Robe's corporeal and imaginary ideas, tho' he should take in intellectual ones to help them, are quite overturned by that learned author, who he thought would assist him.

Mr. Robe *(ibid.)* next cites Mr. Durham: But to as little purpose; for both Charnock and Durham speak of a rational conception, a rational and spiritual knowledge. But where will he *get me a divine of* common sense that speaks of an *imaginary knowledge*, or an imaginary idea of Christ as man?

This is a new term brought into divinity; which I fear ha a new principle under it, according to that maxim cited b Hiereboord, p. 220. *Qui fingit nova verba, simul nova dogmat fingit:* Words and terms are brought in with new principle and opinions. It argues Mr. Robe has neither thought of hi own principles about imaginary ideas, nor the ſpirituality o Mr. Durham's doctrine, when he cites, as for his purpoſe theſe words of Durham, namely, "That he who is man, i alſo God, &c." Can he form in his mind or brain the imag or picture of the man who is God, or of any of theſe propoſi tions relating to the human nature of Chriſt, which he cite from Durham on the Revelation, in his Letter, p. 36, 37 And yet Mr. Robe has the confidence to ſay, p 37 at the foot "Can there be any thing more expreſsly oppoſite to all theſ heretical propoſitions, you [Mr Fiſher] and Mr Erſkine hav advanced, to lead people to a regardleſſneſs and neglect c the human nature of Jeſus Chriſt?" It is ſtrange if Mr Rob would have us here heretical, becauſe we allow the rationa and intellectual, and believing conception of Chriſt in his h man nature, but not of his ſenſitive and imaginary conceptio How vaſt is the odds between theſe two, even in conceivin any mere man upon earth? When we think of a man by ou mere ſenſitive powers, or by an imaginary idea, then we hav no other view of him but in his outward bodily form, an draw the picture of that in the brain: But, when we conceiv of a man rationally, or by an intellectual idea, then we vie him under intelligible conſiderations, as a perſon either endue with, or deſtitute of ſuch and ſuch graces, virtues, gifts, ta ents, offices, ſtations, employments, characters, parts, learn ing, accompliſhments or endowments, relating to a ration creature of the human kind. Now, a rational knowledge a conception of Chriſt as man, belongs to religion; becauſe w cannot have a ſpiritual knowledge, if it be not rational: But ſenſitive knowledge, or imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, belon neither to reaſon nor religion, but only to ſenſe and fancy.

How judiciouſly Mr. Robe cites even the very laſt of h quotations from Durham, may be gueſſed, when theſe are th words, namely, "Faith would not only reſpect Chriſt ſimp as interceſſor, but as an interceſſor who is man in our natur who hath experience of our infirmities, and tender ſympath towards us." How can this be to his purpoſe, when th queſtion is not, Whether the perſon of Chriſt in both nature divine and human in one perſon, be the object of faith an *ſpiritual conſideration*? which all grant; but, Whether Chriſt *human nature*, which Mr. Robe makes the object of fancy, ca

in that reſpect, be the object of faith? which I deny, and have proven to be abſurd and abominable. The whole ſtrain of his diſcourſe ſeems to point at beſt towards this ſtrange doctrine, viz. the making both the natures of Chriſt, divine and human, equal objects of faith and worſhip with his divine perſon. But it will ſoon appear to thoſe who are judicious, that to make Chriſt's two diſtinct natures equally the objects of faith, as we do his perſon, is groſs error and heterodoxy; and that to make them both equally the object of worſhip, as we do his perſon, is groſs ignorance and idolatry.

Mr. Robe boaſts (p. 38.) of his having aſſerted that very truth all orthodox divines have aſſerted before him; and adds, "I ſhall forbear to adduce any more divines, unleſs a new call be for them." I ſhall only here tell him, he can have no call to cite more, becauſe he hath not yet cited one that makes for him; and therefore his work is to begin: And I ſhould be content to allow him the uſe of my library, as well his own, to try his hand, if he can adduce but one divine that ever uſed, in treating divinity, this one ſingle expreſſion, namely, *an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man*; for, till Mr. Robe uſed it, and this new imaginary work he is a promoter of, introduced it, I never heard nor read of it.

"Having then given (ſays he, *ibid.*) a fair ſtate of the queſtion, and ſhewn my agreement and your diſagreement with the greateſt and moſt orthodox, yea reforming divines, I proceed to conſider the arguments brought againſt my poſitions; and ſhall begin with your's [Mr. Fiſher's] as reaſon ſhould, ſeeing you have a laſting claim to have led Mr. Erſkine and others into this pitiful ſcrape, &c." *Anſwer.* In regard Mr. Robe here takes it for granted that Mr. Fiſher hath been a leader to ſome of us, in oppoſing Mr. Robe's deluſive work and imaginary doctrine, and brought us over to ſome new opinions we never had before, though I would reckon it my advantage, if even a little child ſhould lead me in a right way, as it is ſaid, Iſa. xi. 6. yet I ſhall for once not only deny my reverend brother Mr. Fiſher the honour of being my leader in this matter, but alſo demonſtrate to Mr. Robe, that I was of the ſame opinion, in oppoſition to his imaginary religion, as now I am, before ever I knew of ſuch a man as Mr. Fiſher. This I do, by relating ſome notes of a ſermon I preached above twenty years ago, upon that text, *What think ye of Chriſt?* to which ſome that are now eminent favourers of this deluſive work and imaginary doctrine, were then earwitneſſes. I cite the words as they are printed in the London edition, prefaced by the reverend Mr. Bradbury, vol. i. p. 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44. "Hath God revealed his Son in you

Gal. i. 16. Have you ſeen the Son? He that ſees the natural ſun in the firmament, hath a thought of it ſuitable to the ſight he hath thereof: But a man that hath been born blind, and never ſaw the light, he cannot have a right notion or thought of the ſun, though you ſhould ſpeak never ſo much of the glory of it to him. I have heard of a man born blind, on whom a great deal of pains was taken to let him underſtand what a glorious creature the ſun was, and what bright beams and rays it ſends forth through all the world; but he was ſo far from having any thoughts about it, that, after all the pains taken on him that was poſſible, he cries out, *O now!* (ſays he) *I know what it is; it is juſt like the ſound of a trumpet.* Poor man! there was the beſt notion he could frame about it, for he never had eyes So it is here, Sirs; we are all born blind, having no ſpiritual eyes, till God open the eyes of the underſtanding, and enlighten the mind in the knowledge of Chriſt. We may ſpeak of his glory and excellency; but the beſt you can make of him is, O he is like a very ſtately and majeſtic perſon as ever you ſaw or heard tell of! and ſo you form the image of a great man, ſitting on a lofty throne, compaſſed about with ſo many ſparkling attendants in fine robes; and what you have heard with your natural ears of any perſon, or ſeen with your natural eyes, or can conceive with your natural underſtanding or reaſon, helps you to, or furniſhes you with materials for framing ſuch a notion of him. But what is all this? It is nothing but an image in your own brain, a carnal, fantaſtic thought. The true Chriſt is the image of the inviſible God, the wiſdom of God, and the power of God, God man in one perſon. Now, have you got a ſpiritual diſcerning? for *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: they are fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.*—The queſtion, then, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is a trial of our faith; which faith is the evidence of things not ſeen. We have no more faith than an ox or an horſe, if we believe no more than we ſee or feel. —There is a threefold ſeeing or feeling that is to be ſeparated from believing. The *firſt* is a *corporeal* ſeeing or feeling. Thomas thought it a better way to believe Chriſt to be riſen, by ſeeing and feeling him, than by running to the promiſes. But Chriſt tells him, that the beſt and moſt bleſſed way was contrary to that, John xx. 29. *2dly*, There is a *rational* ſeeing, that is to be ſeparated from believing. Though none can believe without the exerciſe of their rational faculties *ſpiritualized, and* though it be the higheſt reaſon to believe *what God ſpeaks*; yet to make natural reaſon the rule and *ground of faith, is* not to believe at all, &c. 3dly, There is a

ſpiritual ſeeing, that is to be ſeparated from faith. It is true, there is a ſpiritual ſeeing of ſanctified knowledge and underſtanding that is eſſential to faith: There is no believing without this ſeeing, John vi 40. But there is a ſpiritual ſeeing of experience, &c."—From what I then delivered in this manner, it is evident, that my principles, in oppoſition to Mr. Robe's imaginary doctrine and ideal religion, are the very ſame that I maintained, when neither Mr. Fiſher could be my leader, nor Mr. Robe my antagoniſt; and that it is only Mr. Robe himſelf that hath been led into the pitiful ſcrape of new doctrines and new deluſions.

Mr. Robe ſays, p. 38. "He never aſſerted that an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, was or could be an imaginary idea of that perſon who is God-man." Remark. If ſo, then he muſt own that the perſon who is God man, and whoſe perſon hath no parts, being but one undivided perſon, is the only object of faith; and, conſequently, the object of his imaginary idea, which cannot terminate on that perſon, can be no part of the object of faith. Therefore, whether he will or not, his aſſertion leads him to be of that very opinion of mine, which he charges with blaſphemy. And, if he won't take with the charge, I have as little reaſon to do ſo.

He aſſerts, p. 39, as he does elſewhere, That he can never believe what he hath no idea or conception of; and, conſequently he cannot believe the glorified humanity of Chriſt in heaven, without forming an idea or repreſentation of it, as he does of *Enoch* or *Elias*. I muſt ſay the compariſon is odious. The humanity of Chriſt as I have ſhewed, is in ſuch a ſituation, in our incarnate God, as to be beyond all natural conceptions; inſomuch that we cannot conceive truly and rightly of his human nature any other way than we conceive of his perſon, namely, by faith.

SECT. V.

Mr. Robe ſays, p. 41 "To make an image of the ſecond perſon, or of God, is indeed expreſsly forbidden; But to forbid to make a true image, would be to forbid an impoſſibility; neither is it forbidden as groſs idolatry. To worſhip ſuch an image, is the idolatry forbidden. The making the image is forbidden upon another account. We do not charge the Lutherans with groſs idolatry, becauſe they make ſuch images, though we do the Papiſts, who worſhip them." Remark. Mr. Robe cannot *free himſelf* from the charge of groſs idolatry he *here mentions; becauſe* he not only allows the making in hi

mind an image of Chriſt's human nature, but he allows divine worſhip to be given to it; for he makes it a part of the object of faith, which faith is the leading and principal part of divine worſhip. So that here, upon the matter, he proves himſelf to be an idolater. He condemns not the Lutherans for being image makers, but the Papiſts for being image worſhippers. But in the concern of religion, both the making and worſhipping of any graven image are expreſsly forbidden in the ſecond commandment. And yet, if a mental image of Chriſt's human nature by an imaginary idea be allowed, as neceſſary to faith or believing, it would ſeem that a molten image is preferable to a mental image, and the Popiſh way moſt eligible. Why? Becauſe according to the Popiſh argument, *Magis movent viſa, quam audita*: The ſeeing of things is more moving and affecting than the hearing of them. Even ſo likewiſe, the ſight of the eye gives a clearer view, and more affecting knowledge of things, than any imaginary notion and mental image thereof. Thus the ſight of the ſun with the eye is a far better view, than when one ſhuts his eyes, and only perceives it in his fancy and imagination, or, when the ſun is abſent, and at midnight, he forms an image of it in his mind. In like manner, ſuppoſe two men come into a houſe, the one with a maſk upon his face, and the other without any maſk, the ſenſitive idea we have of the unmaſked face, is much more plain and clear than the imaginative idea we have of the face behind the maſk; which we can only imagine to be a face like that of ſome other man; but can have no ſuch clear notion of it, as of the other. All which proves, that mere corporeity, or a human body, can be better repreſented to the mind by an outward corporeal image ſet before the bodily eye, than it can be by any inward mental image, formed by the help of an imaginary idea; and, conſequently, may be ſuppoſed to be much more helpful than Mr. Robe's internal imagery; which ought to be the more abominate, as it is the mother, the ſpring and ſource of the former: Yea, it is the root on which all the groſs idolatry in the world did grow, as I have hinted already. Hence Charnock, vol. I. p. 95. ſpeaking of Rom i. 21, 23. ſays, "They ſet up vain images of God in their fancy, before they ſet up idolatrous repreſentations of him in their temples." And, a few lines above, he ſays, "We ſet that active power of imagination on work, and there comes out a god, (a calf,) whom we own for *a notion* of God.—When holy Agur ſpeaks of God, he cries *out, That he had not the underſtanding of a man, nor the knowledge of the Holy*, Prov. xxx. 2, 3 (*What is his name, and what is his*

Son's name, if thou canſt tell? ver. 4.) He did not think rationally of God, as man might at his firſt creation. There are as many carved images of God, as there are minds of men, and as many monſtrous ſhapes as theſe corruptions, into which they would transform him" Then he ſhews how theſe vain imaginations relating to God, are worſe than idolatry and Atheiſm, p. 96, 97. Groſs idolatry in the heathen world is not more owing to vain pictures of God in the imagination, than, in the chriſtian world, it is owing to vain images of Chriſt's human body in the brain; which ſo abuſe the underſtanding, and darken the mind, as to mar all rational and intellectual views, and conſequently, all ſpiritual and believing contemplations of Chriſt's glorious perſon. But more of this ſubject will afterwards occur.

Mr Robe (p. 42) owns again, "it is impoſſible to have any true imaginary idea of God. (But he ſays,) That to aſſert that we cannot receive Chriſt, as offered in the goſpel, without an imaginary conception of him as man hath a tendency to lead people off from the true Chriſt in the word, to a falſe Chriſt upon the imagination: This is what you [Mr. Fiſher] have not made the leaſt eſſay to prove, and what you ſhall never be able to do" Remark. One would think it is very eaſy to prove what Mr Robe ſo boldly thinks can never be done. This I do by the following argument in common form.

To aſſert, that a man cannot believe in Chriſt without that which neceſſarily preſents a falſe Chriſt to his imagination; hath a native tendency to lead people off from the true Chriſt in the word, to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination. But to aſſert, that a man cannot believe in Chriſt without an imaginary conception or idea of him as man, is to aſſert that we cannot believe without that which neceſſarily preſents a falſe Chriſt to the imagination. *Therefore* it follows, that to aſſert we cannot believe in Chriſt as offered in the goſpel, without an imaginary idea of him as man, hath a native tendency to lead people off from the true Chriſt in the word, to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination ——I know nothing Mr. Robe can deny here, but that part of the minor, which ſuppoſes that his imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, neceſſarily preſents a falſe Chriſt to the imagination, and conſequently hath a tendency to lead people off from the true Chriſt in the word, to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination. Therefore I prove this by the following arguments

(1.) The true Chriſt in the word is ſome other thing than a corporeal object: But an imaginary conception of Chriſt as *man hath no other thing* but a corporeal object. There-

fore an imaginary conception of Chriſt as man hath a native tendency to lead people off from the true Chriſt in the word, to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination. Mr. Robe can neither deny the major nor the minor, if conſiſtent with himſelf; and therefore the concluſion muſt hold.

(2.) The true Chriſt in the word is the perſon God man: But Chriſt repreſented in the imaginary conception as man, is not the perſon God man. Therefore it follows, as above, that it leads to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination.

(3.) The true Chriſt held forth in the word, is exhibite there as a Prophet, Prieſt, and King: But no imaginary conceptions can have any offices or relations whatſoever for its object. Therefore it leads to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination.

(4.) The true Chriſt can be ſeen by faith no where but in the word: But an imaginary idea or conception cannot ſee him in the word; which is ſpirit and truth; the object only of rational knowledge and faith. Therefore that idea leads to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination

(5.) The true Chriſt in the word is a whole Chriſt. The imaginary conception of him as man, is not a conceiving of a whole Chriſt, but of a mere human body. Therefore it leads to a falſe Chriſt in the imagination.

(6.) The true humanity of Chriſt in the word is a divine humanity, as Auguſtine expreſſes it; becauſe the word was made fleſh, and is God in our nature: But the imaginary conception of Chriſt as man, can include nothing divine. Therefore an imaginary conception of Chriſt as man, hath a tendency to lead people off from the true Chriſt, and the true humanity of Chriſt, in the word, to a falſe Chriſt, and a falſe humanity in the imagination

Arguments to this purpoſe might be multiplied. But any one of theſe is ſufficient to prove what Mr. Robe ſays is impoſſible. Yet he may ſuppoſe his aſſertion ſtands good, becauſe ſtill, ſays he it is true, that there is no thinking of Chriſt as man, or of his human nature, in the word, without an imaginary conception of him as man in the head; that is, there can neither be a rational nor religious apprehenſion of him as Redeemer God man, without a ſenſitive and imaginative conception of him as man. This is as much as to ſay, Mr. Robe cannot believe ſuch an one he is told of is a reaſonable man, without an imaginary conception of him as man. But does that conception of him as a man belong either to the act of believing, or the object of that belief, namely, a reaſonable man as ſuch? Every one may ſee what confuſion this is, and how the brutal and rational ideas are miſerably blended.

an a man's intellectuals be seen with bodily organs? Faith comes by hearing; and, because a man cannot hear without ears, would it therefore be good sense to say, he cannot believe without ears? But, if he does not believe with his ears, but with his heart, it is ridiculous to say, he cannot believe without his ears. There is a vast difference between a man hearing what he believes, and believing what he hears. Without his ears he cannot hear what he believes, but yet with his ears he cannot believe what he hears. If he could believe with his ears, then it would be reasonable to say, he cannot believe without them. But, since he does not at all believe with them, to say he cannot believe what he hears without them, is unreasonable; because he can as little believe with them. Even so, one cannot believe in Christ as God-man, says Mr. Robe, without an imaginary idea of a man. But he can as little believe with it. Suppose none can believe without it, as an *attendant*; yet neither can any believe with it, as an *assistant*: Its attendance may be unavoidable, while flesh and spirit are together; but its assistance is unavailing, because all the knowledge that imaginary idea imports, is not spiritual, but carnal; and is not rational, but notional; and therefore hath in it no food nor footing for faith, but for fancy.

Again, p. 42. there follows a master piece of dreadful doctrine. "It is possible (says he) to have an imaginary idea of Christ in his human nature; and it is not possible that we can think of the human nature of the true Christ in the word, without a conception of him, or an idea of him in the mind, by the help and assistance of that faculty called the imagination; which is what is all along call an imaginary idea. And this (*N. B.*) *is as true a Christ as Christ in the word; if it be an idea of him, as held forth in the word.* For instance: The true Christ is held forth to us in that word, 1 Tim. ii 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*" Then he cites Flavel; but as far from his purpose as east from west. But to what is said above I answer: Here is very strange language, and two very absurd and abominable suppositions. The *first* is, That we may have an imaginary idea of Christ as held forth in the word. Which is impossible, according to Mr. Robe's own explication of that idea, unless Christ held forth in the word were nothing else but a corporeal object. If the *words* of Christ are *spirit* and *life*, John vi 63. then his word is a spiritual object, and cannot be apprehended by corporeal, but spiritual powers. So that a man might as well say, he can see with his ears, and hear with his eyes, or see and hear *with his hands* and feet, as to say, he can appre-

head Christ, as held forth in the word, by an imaginary The word is the object of that knowledge and faith that perceive truths, which are all spiritual things; but ca be the object of that fancy that can perceive nothing bu images of things, which are all corporeal 2*dly*, He supp yea, plainly asserts, that the Christ perceived by an ima ary idea is as true a Christ, as Christ in the word, if it l idea of him, as held forth in the word. I have shewed, an imaginary idea of Christ as held forth in the word, is al and impossible; and now I am to shew, that the other pression is vile and abominable. And I have scarce pat to read such horrible doctrine, importing that a represent of Christ by an image of him in the brain of a man, is as a Christ as the Christ represented in the word of God. strangely must the man be attached to his imaginary not that makes the representation of Christ therein as true a representation of him in the divine word? He makes hi aginary idea to give him as true a picture of Christ in the cy, as the infallible truth of God gives us in the word. then a corporeal Christ in the imagination is as truly th ject of faith, as the true Christ, Immanuel God with us, the word; and so a Christ within us is as good as a C without us. Here is a wide door opened to dreadful Ei siasm, and damnable Quakerism. For, if the Christ we see in the fancy, be as true a Christ as the Christ we read the word, then he is reckon[illegible] no other but a phanta Christ, according to the dream of the old heretics Mar and Valentinus; whom Tertullian refutes in these wo *Si Christi caro phantastica, tum & omnia quæ per carnem gesta putativus habitus, putativus actus, imaginarius operator, imagi opera:* If the flesh of Christ be phantastic, then all things he did in the flesh were so, a putative habit, a putative an imaginary worker, and imaginary works. It is true, Robe says, Christ hath a true and real body: But, if Chr the fancy and imagination, be as true a Christ as Christ re sented in the word, then a phantastic Christ is a true C. They that advance such strange doctrines, deserve the name that Tertullian gave to the Valentinians, when he they were *imaginarii christiani*, imaginary christians. Robe's language here seems to resemble the accounts we of the Cartesian ideas of God, which the learned Mast refutes, *Gangræna*, p 213,—216. They made their vica and representative idea to be truly the same with the t *represented*, as it is objectively in the mind; and so are ch *ed there, (1.)* With making God and the idea of him to be

and the ſame; or, which is to the ſame purpoſe, making God to be the idea of himſelf; which is an open and moſt groſs contradiction. (2.) With making the number of gods according to the number of ideas. And, (3.) With making (conſequentially) that idea, if it be God, the object of worſhip and adoration; which wants nothing of the groſſeſt idolatry, whereby every one were bound to adore his own idea of God. (4.) Since they aſſert (as he proves from the words of Wittichius), That we have in our minds the idea of God, not indeed always actually preſent, but that we can *depromere ex nobis ipſis*, bring forth by or from ourſelves that idea;—hence it will follow, that we can make a god to ourſelves, and that out of ourſelves. To this purpoſe ſpeaks Maſtricht on the foreſaid ſubject. And it is eaſy to ſee how applicable all this is to Mr. Robe's doctrine, making his imaginary Chriſt a real and true Chriſt, and as true a Chriſt as Chriſt in the word. We are ſure, that Chriſt is the very ſame thing the word of faith declares him to be. But, if Chriſt as repreſented in whatever nature by any idea, and in his human nature by an imaginary idea, be as true a Chriſt, then the abſurdities above mentioned will equally follow. (1.) That Chriſt and the imaginary idea of him are one and the ſame; or that Chriſt is an imaginary idea, which is dreadful. (2.) That, according to the number of imaginary ideas, ſuch the number of Chriſts; that is, conſequently, there is no Chriſt at all; (as the ſame author, *ut ſupra*, argues from the ſuppoſition of more gods than one). (3.) That the imaginary idea or image of Chriſt in the head is the object of faith and worſhip, and is to be deified and adored; which is the groſſeſt idolatry. (4.) That every one can make a Chriſt to himſelf, out of his own head, whenever he pleaſes. I durſt not ſpeak in Mr. Robe's ſtrain, even of the moſt lively actings of ſaving faith, ſo as to ſay, Chriſt received by faith into the heart, is as true a Chriſt as Chriſt held forth in the word; becauſe Chriſt in the word is the perfect object of faith, exhibite in the perfect rule and ground of faith: Whereas Chriſt in the heart is neither of theſe; becauſe the moſt elevated and ſpiritual actings of faith are attended with too many of Mr. Robe's vain imaginary ideas. Hence, no man can lawfully believe in a Chriſt as received into his heart, but as a Chriſt revealed in the word. *Chriſt dwells in the heart by faith*, Eph iii 17 that is, by faith in his word; where alone by that faith the believer ſees the true Chriſt: But he cannot ſee him in his heart or affections, far leſs in his head or imaginations. Indeed a true believer may *ſometimes feel Chriſt joyfully* in his heart, *after* he hath believed, *Eph. i. 13. but he can never* ſee him believingly there; for faith

can see his perfect picture no where but in his word. N where else is the true Christ to be seen, as the object of faith Rom x. 6, 7, 8. *The righteousness which is of faith speaks on th wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven; that i to bring Christ down from above? Or, who shall descend into t deep; that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead? But wh saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart That is the word of faith which we preach.* On which words D Owen, the author of the sermon, intitled, *The best preservati against Popery*, hath these words following "The inquiry i How we may be made partakers of Christ, and righteousne by him? Or, How we may have him present with us? Thi says the apostle, is done by the word of the gospel, which preached, which is nigh unto us in our mouths, and in ou hearts. No, say these men; we cannot understand how should be so; we do not find that it is so, that Christ is mad nigh unto us, present to us by his word: Wherefore we wi ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above; for w will make images of him in his glorious state in heaven, a thereby he will be present to us, or nigh unto us; and we wi descend into the deep, to bring Christ up again from the dea And we will do it, by making first crucifixes, and then imag of his glorious resurrection, bringing him again unto us fro the dead. This will be in the place and room of that wo of the gospel, which you pretend to be alone useful and effe tual unto these ends." *Mortifying Exercises*, vol. v. p 223, 22 And a little above are these words: "Their minds bei dark, carnal, and prone to superstition, as are the minds all men by nature, they would see nothing in the spiritual a presentation of him (namely, Christ) in the gospel, that h any power on them, or did in any measure affect them. these images, by the means of sight and imagination, th found that which did really work upon the affections, and, they thought, did excite them unto the love of Christ." He is the spring and root of all image-worship in the world, wi ther mental or external; none of which can give the repr sentation of the true Christ, of whom we have only the tr and spiritual representation in the word of the gospel. "O understandings are of such a low stature, (says Burgess) th we must climb up to the tree of life, the scriptures, to see Jes They are the only ladder whereby we climb up." Davens on Col. p. 317. says, "In things respecting religion, nothi is to be concluded upon without a sure foundation. No *that foundation* is the word of God; for in this we see wh *ever we see* pertaining to salvation. He that thrusts in a *thing which* he finds not here, that man sees not that th

but only dreaming, or in his ſleep, thinks he ſees" From what I have ſaid it appears, that as, on the one hand, to ſpeak of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as held forth in the word, is an expreſſion irreconcileable with common philoſophy, ſo, on the other hand, to ſay, that Chriſt in the imagination is as true a Chriſt as Chriſt in the word, is irreconcileable with ſound divinity; yea, a moſt ignorant ſaying, and a groſs falſhood. May God convince him of it, and ſave his readers from drinking in ſuch deluſion.

Mr. Robe (p. 43.) repeats his beloved propoſition, *That we cannot think upon Chriſt really, as he is God and man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, or in his human nature.* But, in a few lines above, he makes this idea the ſame with the repreſentation of Chriſt's human nature *on the underſtanding.* Where I muſt, (1) Keep him in with his own bridle, that he confound not imaginative with rational and ſpiritual underſtanding; *for he* elſewhere declares, "That where the imagination ends, and goes as far as it can, underſtanding begins, or proceeds; and that nothing can be the object of imagination but what is corporeal." Without ſpiritual underſtanding there is no faith, no believing; becauſe we truly believe with our underſtanding. But, *without* an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, it may be ſaid we can believe, becauſe we cannot believe *with* it; therefore, (2.) As I have demonſtrated elſewhere, it is a direct falſhood and fallacy to ſay, we cannot think of Chriſt, or believe in him, as God man, without that imaginary idea of him as man. Mr. Robe ſays it is impoſſible to believe without it. In oppoſition to which I aſſert, as above, it is impoſſible to believe with it. And therefore to ſay, he cannot believe without it is equally childiſh with ſaying, though he had a tongue to ſpeak, yet he cannot ſpeak without breath. True; nor can he breath without air, nor can he breathe in the air without lungs and life; nor hath he life without heat, nor heat without fire: And ſo he cannot ſpeak without ſome or all of the four elements, particularly air and fire. Well, perhaps this is very true, in ſome ſenſe; and yet a very trifle, unworthy of any that lay claim to ſolidity and judgment: But it would be agreeable enough, and a thing ſpoken with judgment, to ſay, I cannot ſpeak *without* a tongue: Why? becauſe I can ſpeak *with* it. Now, if Mr. Robe can believe with his imaginary idea, then he is right to ſay, he cannot believe without it. But no true believer will envy him of that faith.

Again, p. 43. Mr. Robe complains of Mr. Fiſher, as if "he only proved, that we cannot have an imaginary idea of Chriſt as God; wherein (he ſays) he ſtill agrees with him: And yet, (*ſays he*) *you cunningly* draw in the concluſion, as if you had

been arguing all along againſt the poſſibility or lawfulneſs of an imaginary idea of the human nature of the lovely Jeſus. This is not to act like an honeſt Pagan, much leſs like what you give out yourſelf to be." *Remark.* Mr. Fiſher may ſmile at this laſh; if it appears further, from what I here write, that it is impoſſible and unlawful, yea, atheiſtical and idolatrous, to have (what Mr Robe calls) an imaginary idea of the human nature of the lovely Jeſus. Indeed theſe very words appear, in my view, to ſmell rank of idolatry; as if the lovelineſs and beauty of Chriſt's human nature did conſiſt in any thing perceptible by an imaginary idea: Whereas it is truly impoſſible to perceive the real and true lovelineſs of Chriſt, by any mere natural and unrenewed faculty. The lovelineſs of Chriſt's human nature lies in its myſterious union with the divine nature in one and the ſame perſon; and therefore none *ſees the King in his beauty, to whom it is not given to know the myſtery of the kingdom of heaven,* Matth xiii 11. *Fleſh and blood cannot reveal theſe things to us; the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God:* the natural imagination conceives them not May God deliver his people from ſuch a falſe faith, as does not ſhake off Mr. Robe's imaginary ideas; which repreſents nothing of Chriſt but the picture of a mere creature, *without any form or comelineſs.* How vaſtly different from Mr. Robe's imaginary doctrine on this head, are the words of great Dr Owen, on the Spirit, p 152, 153. "That you may not laviſh away the actings of your ſouls upon a falſe object, and think you love Chriſt, when you love only the imagination of your own brain, conſider his human nature, as it was rendered beautiful and lovely by the work of the Spirit of God upon it, before deſcribed Do you love him becauſe he was ſo full of grace and truth, ſo full of holineſs, becauſe in him there was an all-fulneſs of the graces of the Spirit of God, &c. ? If *you* can, and, on the account thereof, do delight in him, and love him, your love is genuine and ſpiritual. But, if your love be merely out of an apprehenſion of his being now glorious in heaven, and there able to do you good or evil, it differs not much from that of the Papiſts, whoſe love is much regulated in its actings, by the good or bad painting of the images whereby they repreſent him, &c —There are three things you are to conſider to this purpoſe. (1.) The bleſſed union of his two natures in the ſame perſon. Herein he is ſingular: God having taken that eſpecial ſtate on him, which in no other thing or way had any conſideration. This therefore is to have a ſpecialty in our divine love to the perſon of Chriſt. (2.) The uncreated glories of his divine nature; whence our

ve hath the ſame object with that which we owe to God absolutely. (3.) That perfection and fulneſs of grace which vells in his human nature, as accommodated unto him by e Holy Ghoſt; whereof we have treated. If you love the rſon of Chriſt, it muſt be on theſe conſiderations: Which, hile ſome have neglected, they have doated on their own iaginations; and, while they have thought themſelves even k of love for Chriſt, they have only languiſhed in their wn fancies."

Mr. Robe proceeds, p 43. to fall directly upon Mr. Erſkine, ying, "I now proceed to conſider what the reverend Mr. alph Erſkine hath ſaid in this ſame argument, in his foreioted Appendix, from p 48, &c. Here, (ſays he), there is flood of words rolling hither and thither, without the ſteay direction of art and reaſon. Here there is more of the oly ſcriptures perverted and profaned, than ever I ſaw any 'here elſe in ſo little bounds. And here there is the moſt inning and ſophiſtical dealing that hath ever been uſed to over and miſrepreſent the truth I ſhall give inſtances of all his." *Remark.* It is needleſs for me to notice theſe words, nleſs I were to render railing for railing. Whether there s truth in what he here ſays, will appear by examining the nſtances he gives. "Firſt, (ſays he), notice, that he ſpeaks f imaginary ideas, as if they were the ſame with ideas of ſpirtual things In the very title page it is, *An Appendix, relating eſpecially to imaginary ideas of ſpiritual things.* P. 147. *The ubject of imaginary ideas of ſpiritual things, Chriſt, heaven, or hell, repreſented to the fancy, &c* Hath he not been told again and gain, that corporeal, and not ſpiritual things, are the objects f theſe ideas, &c.? And I forbear to inſiſt upon the nonſenſe f *the image of ſpiritual things repreſented to the fancy*; while we re ſpeaking all along of the images or ſpecies repreſented o the underſtanding by the imagination" *Anſwer.* If there e any nonſenſe in my words that he here cites, he himſelf is ie author of it; for, though I own, that imaginary ideas of piritual things is what I myſelf here prove to be impoſſible; et that way of ſpeaking is owing to Mr. Robe himſelf, his aking ſome things that are moſt ſpiritual to be the objects f faith and ſpiritual knowledge. So that, when I ſpeak of piritual things as the objects of imaginary ideas, it is only ie words whereby I repreſent Mr Robe's nonſenſe; who lainly is chargeable with this abſurdity, notwithſtanding all is ſolemn declarations to the contrary, and manifold deſcripons of imaginary ideas, as having no ſpiritual, but only corporeal *objects.* *This* may be evident in a few ſentences. *othing but ſpiritual* and invi.ible things are the objects of

faith; nothing but corporeal and visible things are the objects of fancy, and of imaginary ideas. Yet Mr. Robe will make these things that are corporeal and visible to be the objects of faith: Therefore it is evident, he makes things that are spiritual, to be the object of an imaginary idea, or of fancy. If he denies, that he makes any thing corporeal, the object of faith, then he denies that the human body of Christ, as such, is the object of faith; because it may be the object of any man's fancy or imagination; and if so, then he is either chargeable himself with the heresy and blasphemy he accused me of, in denying that that can be the object of faith properly that is the object of any man's fancy. If he does not take with this, then either he is chargeable with the nonsense of supposing the images of spiritual and invisible things, that are the objects of faith, to be represented to the fancy; or else he supposes, which is the same, and as great nonsense, that the object of faith may be the object of fancy, or the object of fancy the object of faith; or that, contrary to scripture, faith is the evidence of things seen and visible, as well as of things not seen, or of things that are sensible, and can be fancied, as well as of things that properly are credible, and can be believed.

The truth relating to Christ's human body, *That he hath a true body: That he bare our sins in his own body on the tree: That he was put to death in the flesh*, &c. is matter of faith, as all oth r truths recorded in the word of God are. And thus Christ's human nature and body as represented in a *truth*, is part of the object of faith; for truth is no corporeal object, but a spiritual and intelligible thing. But Christ's human body itself, as it is the object of an imaginary idea, is a corporeal object; though, as it is the object of faith, it is a spiritual and inconceivable mystery, namely, humanity subsisting in the person of the Son of God. Therefore Mr Robe proves, against himself, that he brings down spiritual things to be the objects of imaginary ideas; and turns them to corporeal objects. Mr. Robe says he is speaking all along of *the images or species represented to the understanding by the imagination*. This he says in opposition to what he calls *the nonsense of the images of spiritual things represented to the fancy*. But, as I show elsewhere how far I disapprove of Mr. Robe's philosophy herein; so these two he sets in opposition to each other, will be found to come to one and the same thing. For, if the human body of Christ, as it is the object of faith, must, as I have shewed, be a spiritual and invisible object, and yet, as it is the object of sense or fancy, must be a corporeal and visible object; then it is a fit expression of this nonsense of Mr. Robe's, to call it the image of spiritual things represented to the fancy, or set

p for the fancy to look at; which is all one with the ſpecies r images repreſented by the imagination (as he ſays) to the nderſtanding: For, in that caſe, the objects of fancy muſt by me outward mean be firſt repreſented outwardly to the fan- y or imagination, and then inwardly by the imagination to he underſtanding; for *outward things*, as he ſays, ſpeaking of nſible ſigns, p. 10. *leave their ſpecies or image upon the imagina- on*; which is *ever afterward helpful to the other faculties*; (no oubt, he means eſpecially the underſtanding). But how lit- le help it gives, and how much hurt it does to the underſtand- ng, to think upon ſpiritual and inviſible things, that are the bjects of faith, I had occaſion to ſhew; and how even out- ard artificial images would do yet better, than theſe inward atural ones, were it not that no corporeal image whatſoever an bear any likeneſs to him who is the image of the inviſible God. Beſides, to ſpeak of images preſented by the imagin- tion to the underſtanding, to me, ſeems as great nonſenſe, (to uſe Mr Robe's words), as the former, in ſome reſpects: For, however the underſtanding works oft upon occaſion of corporeal images ſet before it, as they are things intelligible; yet images of corporeal things, as they are in themſelves, and in the abſtract, being among the number only of *ſenſibles*, are, as ſuch, objects that can only be preſented to the ſenſe or fan- y; but cannot properly be the objects of rational under- anding, until ſomething be ſuppoſed or aſſerted about them, hat ſhall render them things intelligible, or that can be un- derſtood. And therefore Mr Robe ſeems, in my apprehen- ion, to explain but one piece of nonſenſe by another.

SECT. VI.

Mr Robe (p. 45.) falls upon my having aſſerted, that an maginary idea of a crucified Chriſt is no better, than a Po- iſh crucifix, and mere mental idolatry. I paſs what idle words he here writes about my only proof of this, its being, *I think*; but ſhall endeavour to prove what I ſaid to be truth. Only, before I do ſo, I muſt notice how Mr. Robe here ſeems o aſſert the lawfulneſs of making an external image of Jeſus Chriſt, alledging Turretine would have told me ſo, in his an- wer to a Lutheran divine. If Mr. Robe had full confidence, hat Turretine was on his ſide, I queſtion not but he would ave cited volume and page, as he doth ſome others very lit- le to his purpoſe. But, ſuppoſe Turretine (which yet is not he caſe) had been of Lutheran principles on this head, al- owing *images in churches*; yet Mr. Robe ſhould have mind-

ed, that a greater than Turretine has ſaid, *What agreemen hath the temple of God with idols?* Many learned author alſo write in oppoſition to what Mr. Robe here makes lawful and, particularly, I know, the Calviniſts, writing againſt th Lutheran divines about images in their temples, calling them *laicorum libri*, the books of the common people, or of the un learned; they anſwer, "That they are no other books bu ſuch as God calls *Teachers of lies and of vanity*, Hab ii. 18. Zech x. 2." Thus the learned profeſſor of divinity Henricus Al ting*, "Concerning images in churches which are not wor ſhipped; to the Lutheran apology, that they ſerve only fo the benefit of the memory, and outward ornament; as ther were images in Solomon's temple, anſwers: They ought no to be placed in churches, no not for memory or ornament *firſt*, becauſe God commanded them to be aboliſhed; *ſecond ly*, becauſe they are incitements and inſtruments of idolatry and ſo ſhew a too evident appearance of evil. Of Solomon' temple there was another reaſon, ſeeing all things there wer done by the command of God, and the figures themſelves wer types of ſpiritual things, which were to have their accom pliſhment in Chriſt." But, ſays Mr. Robe, by the authorit foreſaid, "it is no more unlawful to make an external image o Jeſus Chriſt, than to form an idea or image of him in ou minds." Indeed I think it not ſtrange, to ſee promoters o mental and internal images, to be alſo favourers of externa images of Chriſt: For, if a mental image of him be helpfu to faith, ſurely an external image of him is helpful to an in ternal, as tending mightily to enliven the imagination. doubt not but Lutherans and Papiſts both will reckon them ſelves very much obliged to Mr. Robe, for ſuch conceſſions

But here I cannot but obſerve, that he ſpeaks of an exter nal image of Jeſus Chriſt, and the lawfulneſs of making it and alſo of the forming an image of him in our minds. A image of him! Of whom does he mean? Is it not of Jeſu Chriſt? Why then he muſt here underſtand, contrary to wha he ſeems before to aſſert, the perſon of Chriſt; unleſs he wil ſay, that either the image of Jeſus Chriſt is not the image o a perſon; or elſe that Jeſus Chriſt is not a perſon. If h

* *Syllabus controverſiarum cum Lutheranis*, p. 94, 280. De imaginibu in templis, quæ tamen non coluntur, ſed tantum inſerviunt memoriæ, & externo ornatui; ſicut erant imagines in templo Solomonis. *Reſp.* D imaginibus non loquitur confeſſio. Quæ tamen ne quidem memoriæ au ornatus cauſa ponendæ ſunt in templis: tum quia Deus eas aboleri juſſit tum quia incitamenta ſunt ac inſtrumenta idololatriæ: adeoque nimi evidentem mali ſpeciem præbent. Templi Solomonici alia fuit ratio ubi geſta omnia ex Dei præſcripto, & ipſæ figuræ rerum ſpiritualium i *Chriſto implendarum* typi fuere.

not ſay, that Jeſus Chriſt is not a perſon, then how can he
n the image of him, and yet not of a perſon? If he ſay, that
s not the image of his divine perſon, but of his human na-
e; then how can he draw the image of a human nature, and
: of a perſon? ſince human nature can never be ſeparated,
ber by thought or deed, from being a perſon, either human
divine. The image then of his human nature muſt either
reſent a human perſon, or a divine one. If the image of
us Chriſt he ſpeaks of, repreſent a human perſon, then it is
: the true image of Chriſt, who never had, and never was a
nan perſon; and ſo it conveys nothing but lies and falſe-
ds. If the image of Chriſt he allows of, repreſents a di-
e perſon, then it is the image of God; for Jeſus Chriſt is
d, the ſecond perſon of the glorious Trinity: And, conſe-
ntly, whether Mr. Robe will or not, it is but an idola-
us picture of him who is God, expreſsly forbidden in the
ond command.

But, ſays Mr. Robe, (ibid.) "There is a great difference be-
een an external image, and a mental image: For a mental
ge or imaginary idea, is abſolutely neceſſary, becauſe we
not conceive of any thing, without ſome idea or ſhape
med in our minds." Anſwer. For my part I know no dif-
ence between an external image, and a mental image, ex-
t the difference the ſcripture makes between the filthineſs
the fleſh, and of the ſpirit; from which we are called to
leanſe ourſelves by the faith of the goſpel promiſe, 2 Cor.
. 1. And as far as filthineſs of the ſpirit is worſe and more
tful, than that of the fleſh in ſeveral reſpects; even ſo far
ental idolatry, or mental images of Chriſt, more ſubtily
aring, and worſe than external images, of which the in-
al are the ſpring and origin. But how can this be, ſays
. Robe, "when a mental image is ſo abſolutely neceſſary,
t we cannot conceive of any thing without ſome ſhape
med in our mind?" This is falſe. For there is a way
erein we may conceive of God, as revealed in his word;
l even Mr. Robe hath elſewhere ſaid, we ought to make no
pe or repreſentation of him in our mind. But, ſince it is
orporeal ſhape or image of Chriſt in the mind that he muſt
an, this is a groſs idolatrous way of conceiving of, and
king to him, who ſays, *Look to me, and be ſaved:—For I am
d, and there is none elſe.* But he means *Chriſt as man* Be it

But then, Chriſt as man is not God. Though the man
riſt be God, and therefore is the object of faith; yet Chriſt
man is not God; and therefore neither the object of faith
worſhip: And hence that ſhape or image of him is not
e worſhipped; otherwiſe we worſhip an idol of our own

brain. Yea, hence I infer, that a mental image, instead of being absolutely necessary, is absolutely unlawful; because we cannot conceive of Christ, by the means thereof, without some corporeal shape of him formed in the mind.

Nay, but, says Mr. Robe, (p. 44, 45.) "this image is always accompanied with such a spirit of discretion, whereby we separate that which is true, from that which is false, that there is no danger of idolatry." *Answer.* Here is some very odd and abominable divinity.

First, He speaks of a *true* shape or image of Christ formed in the mind; whereas there is no true image of Christ that it is lawful for us to contemplate, but in the glass of the gospel, 2 Cor. iii. 18. To contemplate an image of Christ formed in the brain, is to gaze upon an idol; and so to turn the mind from him who is *all*, to that which is *nothing*: *For we know*, says the apostle, *that an idol is nothing in the world; and that there is none other God but one*, 1 Cor. viii. 4. That a mental image of Christ is an idol, is plain, from Mr. Robe's own acknowledgement here, that, *if it were a false image*, there is danger of idolatry. But now, a mental image formed by an imaginary idea being, according to his own argument, an image of what is only corporeal, or some bodily shape, here is no representation either of the *glory of the Lord*, or of the *Lord of glory*. To call that image so, would be monstrous ignorance and blasphemy both.

2dly, He says, "This image is always accompanied with a spirit of discretion, whereby we separate that which is true from that which is false, that there is no danger of idolatry." I only want words to express what a proud and arrogant apology is here made for all mental idolaters, that actively form corporeal images or representations of Christ in their mind. For indeed true believers, when acting upon the true Christ, are rather passive than active, when a vain imaginary idea of Christ's human body intrudes itself upon them: Which makes them sometimes fear and tremble, lest they be worshipping but an idol of their own brain instead of Christ. Such is their apprehension of the danger they are in of idolatry. But Mr. Robe thinks there is no danger of it. Why? "This image is always accompanied with such a spirit of discretion, whereby we separate that which is true, from that which is false." I have proven, that there is no true image of Christ at all, but in the word; and that every image formed of him in the head by imagination, is false, and not the object of faith. Therefore such an idea regarded and reverenced, is always *accompanied* with a spirit of delusion, instead of discretion; *and a strong delusion* also, to believe lies: For, as I said above,

God calls every ſuch idol, and image, a *teacher of lies*. Yet Mr. Robe ſeems to leave it to the diſcretion of every mental idolater to judge, whether the image he worſhips be true or falſe; and, if he ſuppoſe it to be a true one, there is no danger of idolatry. May God have mercy on a generation that hath ſuch teachers of falſhood.

But, ſays Mr. Robe, *(ibid.)* "External images, ſuch as a crucifix, is a voluntary work, expreſsly forbidden of God and attended with the greateſt hazard of idolatry." He here ſeems to diſapprove of external images, not of Chriſt; for theſe he ſeems to allow in the preceding page, but ſuch as a crucifix: And why? It is a voluntary work expreſsly forbidden of God. But doth not true philoſophy teach, that mental images that ariſe from active ideas, are alſo voluntary? Hence the ſchools teach, *That the mind is ſometimes active, and ſometimes paſſive, in reſpect of imagination: That it is always paſſive in the perceiving of ſome ideas; but not ſo in the forming of them; and that though ſometimes it is paſſive in forming of ſome imaginary ideas, ſuch as theſe that occur to men in dreams, when aſleep, or in theſe that occur by the mere motion of the animal ſpirits, when awake, though yet the mind is averſe from them, and no ways concurs to the production of them; yet the mind is active in reſpect of theſe phantaſms which it excites in itſelf by volition, or a willing of inclination, to form in itſelf the idea of ſuch a corporeal object. Which voluntary act is followed with a particular motion of the animal ſpirits, wherewith is connected that imaginative idea of the preſent object the mind ſeeks to behold, and of which it had before a ſenſitive idea when preſent by itſelf, or ſome corporeal thing repreſenting it. In ſuch caſes the imagination is under the government of the will.* According to theſe philoſophical principles, it will be found that Mr. Robe's mental image of Chriſt's human body is a voluntary work of imagery, as much as external images are; eſpecially when he defends the ſame as lawful, yea, and abſolutely neceſſary to faith. And yet ſuch an image is as expreſsly forbidden in ſcripture, as the external image of a crucifix; which, Mr. Robe ſays, is expreſsly forbidden. No doubt it is ſo by neceſſary conſequence; but yet there is no expreſs ſcripture forbidding it in particular; whereas there are many ſcriptures expreſsly againſt mental images, or vain imaginations, Rom. i. 21. 2 Cor. x. 5. Jer. xiii. 10. and xvi 12. &c. And therefore theſe are attended with the greateſt hazard of idolatry.

But next follows Mr. Robe's grand puzzling queſtion, "Can you, or any man think of, explain, read, or hear the hiſtory of Chriſt's *ſufferings* and death upon the croſs, without an

imaginary idea of a crucified Jesus, or Christ in his human nature hanging, suffering, and dying upon the cross? Answer this (says he) directly, without silly and childish evasion. Can you have such an idea of him, without your imagination and the actual exercise of it, presenting to your understanding the figure of a cross? This is what all men of sense will tell you." I answer, without needing to make any evasion, that it is a silly and childish question, which no man of sense could possibly propose with any air of gravity, unless he were become as void of sense and reason both, as to make the figure of a cross any part of the object of faith or worship. But before I give a direct answer, for clearing this point, I premise what follows.

A human person is the subject of human actions. This human person acts by his human nature. The human nature, as it constitutes a person, consists of body and soul. Now, all the actions of the body or soul, while the union betwixt them subsists, are the actions of the person, as the subject thereof. While this subject thus consist of flesh and spirit, in some of his actions, because he hath a *body*, he may be said to act *sensitively*, as he is *flesh*; in other actions, the person, because he hath a *rational soul*, may be said to act *intellectually*, as he is *spirit*. By which soever of these ways he acts, whether as flesh or spirit, yet the person is the subject or agent.

Thus, the divine person of Christ, the Mediator, having two natures, since his incarnation, namely, the divine and human nature, his human nature is neither a human person nor a divine person; for it is no person at all, but a nature. The divine and human nature of Christ constitutes one and the same divine person. This divine person is the subject of all his Mediatorial actions and passions. Whether he act, as he is by his divine nature, or, as *man*, by his human, they are all the actions of his divine person. Thus, when it is said Christ, as to his human nature, or as man, was born of a virgin; yet it was the divine person, Christ, Immanuel, God man, that was born of a virgin. Christ as man was crucified; yet it was the person Christ that was crucified. Christ as man rose from the grave, and ascended to heaven; but Christ was the person, or the subject rising and ascending. Every subject that is an agent, acts by its nature. All the actions then of Christ's human nature were the actions of his divine person: And whether they were the actions of Christ as man, or of Christ as God; yet they were all the actions of the same subject, the same divine person. Therefore when Mr Robe says, *Can any man believe that Christ was born, crucified, dead, rose, &c.*

without an imaginary idea of him as man? I answer, that these actions as they are supposed to be the objects of an imaginary idea, or the objects of sense, are not conceived as the actions of that divine person Christ; for no sensitive or imaginative idea can conceive of them as they are the actions of a divine person; and only, as such, as they are the objects of faith, and not of sense or imagination. The actions of a human nature, or of a human body, may be thought to be the object of an imaginary idea; and the actions of Christ's human body may be reckoned so, to any man that hath a notion of any mere human actions: But then, this is no more the object of faith, nor any part of that object, than the actions of any other men; (as Mr. Robe hath expressed it, though it must be of mere men that he speaks; for so all other men, besides Christ, are.) But the actions of the divine person of Christ cannot be objects of an imaginary idea; because the person, or subject of the actions, is not perceivable by any corporeal idea. The actions of other men are intelligible by mere natural ideas; because here they see both the action and the agent; they can conceive of the action, because they can conceive of the subject or person acting. But the actions of the divine person Christ, as such, are not perceivable by any merely natural, and far less imaginary ideas. They may indeed conceive of his actions as man: But, seeing, as man, he is neither God nor a person, what a gross absurdity and mere impossibility does that idea lead them unto; namely, to see an action without seeing an agent, to see a nature acting, and yet no person the actor, to see or conceive of a predicate without a subject? For the only subject or agent is the divine person of Christ, the God-man, whom they do not, and cannot see in that light. To this purpose Davenant, cites with approbation, these notable words of T. Aquinas, quæst. disp. de Verbo, art. 5. *Humanitas Christi est* instrumentum, *divinitas est* agens *principale in opere salutis nostræ adimplendo: The humanity of Christ is the instrument, the divinity is the principal agent in accomplishing the work of our salvation.* I only chuse rather to say, that the human nature is the instrument, and the divine person Immanuel, God-man, is the agent in this work*. Now, if the human nature is the instrument, and the divine person of Christ be the agent in the work of our redemption, the imaginary idea of

* *Miscovii distinct.* p. 122. Christus, qua Deus, miracula edebat.—Dices. Quid ergo humana natura faciebat? *Resp.* Declarabat quid divina faceret: unde etiam humana Christi natura dicitur a theologis instrumentum miraculorum patrandorum; & instrumentum, non physicum, sed morale. *Alii dicunt esse signum* interveniens, ad cujus presentiam Deus, *sive divina natura, miracula* edebat.

Chriſt as man, and of his doing and ſuffering as man, ſeparate the inſtrument of our redemption from the agent. Why, every action and paſſion of his human nature derives all its virtue and efficacy from the perſon doing and ſuffering: And therefore no fancy of any of theſe actions or paſſions is any way profitable to ſalvation, or helpful to faith; becauſe that imaginary idea (which is owned to have no other but a corporeal object) can conceive nothing of the perſonal glory of the agent, the doer or ſufferer in our room and ſtead. In a word,

The imaginary idea of the man Chriſt is impoſſible; for the man Chriſt is God as well as man in one perſon. Therefore this imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, repreſenteth to the mind no truth, but a lie: For, when by this mean alledge they think upon Chriſt, they are under a groſs deluſion; for, as I have ſaid, Chriſt as man is not God, nor a perſon either; and conſequently, the object of that idea is not the true Chriſt. True faith is founded upon the knowledge of truth, and it is ſtrange doctrine that ſuppoſes we cannot believe in Chriſt without imagining a falſhood.

Now to return to Mr. Robe's queſtion; it opens up the myſtery of iniquity that lies in Mr. Robe's imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, without which, he ſays, we cannot believe in him as God man; that is, without the imagination forming in the mind the figure of a man; nor believe in a crucified Chriſt, without forming in the mind the figure of a croſs or crucifix. And yet theſe ideas of ſuch carnal and corporeal objects belong no more to faith or believing, than light belongs to darkneſs, life to death, or earth to heaven. They belong to ſenſe, to the ſenſe of words, and the ſenſe we have of corporeal things: But, to make them any way belong to faith, is nothing but ignorant idolatry. Indeed the figure of a man, which Mr. Robe will have immixed with the faith of God man, and the figure of a croſs, which he makes neceſſary to the faith of a crucified Chriſt, are both equally idolatrous; becauſe they are both equally corporeal figures, infinitely remote from the true object of faith. But here he brings in Iſaac Ambroſe againſt me, as he ſuppoſes, ſaying, "The Jeſus was crowned with thorns.—Thou art called to behold the man. Doſt thou ſee him? Is thy *imagination ſtrong?*" (Which he writes in capital letters, as if it were a ſtrong confutation.) Anſwer. When that author ſpeaks of Chriſt Jeſus and of beholding the man, I have charity to believe, that he *means* the perſon, that is, the object of faith; and not the figure *of a man*, the object of ſenſe and fancy: Alſo, that, when *he ſpeaks of the* crown of thorns, a reed, and ſuch like, he

meant the many and great ſufferings of the perſon Chriſt, the God-man; which belongs to the object of faith, and not to an imaginary idea of a thorny crown, a reed, which are the objects of ſenſe: And that, when he ſays, Is thy imagination ſtrong? he means a ſanctified imagination, including a ſpiritually enlightened underſtanding, capable of apprehending the proper object of faith. If theſe were not his meaning, and if he underſtood no more than what Mr. Robe's imaginary idea imports, namely, theſe corporeal figures repreſented to the fancy, then, though he had been an angel of light, his doctrine were to be rejected as carnal, and not ſpiritual. I own, I would not chuſe, on ſuch a ſubject, to expreſs myſelf in ſuch words as theſe; *Is thy imagination ſtrong?* both becauſe I ſee no example for it in ſcripture, which never ſpeaks ſo far, as I mind, except once, of imagination, with relation to ſpiritual or holy things, but always in another ſenſe; and alſo, becauſe the imagination may be ſtrong, where yet there is no faith, yea, nothing but ſtrong deluſion.

But here again he cites Charnock, ſpeaking of Chriſt's ſufferings, and ſaying, "Here we may ſee the ſufferings of his body, his pain upon the croſs; and here *fancy* may work about the inconceivable troubles of his ſoul; here fancy may repreſent the piercing of his temples by the thorns, and the dints made in his body." Though this way of ſpeaking would never be my choice, for the reaſons already mentioned, neither ought we to make any man's words our rule; yet I am perſuaded, Charnock would never have expreſſed himſelf in ſuch terms as theſe, if he had thought his words would have been interpreted, as Mr. Robe does, in favours of imaginary ideas of mere corporeal things; as if theſe would incorporate with ſaving faith. And it appears, as I ſaid above, that Charnock here muſt underſtand ſome other thing by fancy, than Mr. Robe means by an imaginary idea; becauſe he ſpeaks of fancy working about the inconceivable troubles of Chriſt's ſoul; whereas Mr. Robe declares, p 24. and elſewhere, that ſpiritual and inconceivable things are not the objects about which the imagination can be converſant. Thus, his authorities do him no ſervice: And yet he boaſts of them, ſaying, "Did theſe great men think, that an imaginary idea of a crucified Chriſt is no better than a Popiſh crucifix, and mental idolatry?" As I have no reaſon to queſtion but theſe men thought the ſame way as I do; ſo I ſhall, before all be done, adduce authorities in abundance, to ſhew, that what I have ſaid is the ſentiments of all ſound divines.

SECT. VII.

Mr Robe (p. 46) comes to what he calls my second argument; where, after he hath curtailed my words, he affirms, "That he never said, that an imaginary idea of Christ in his human nature was faith, or included in it; but that we cannot receive Christ as God-man without it. But, (says he,) it will not follow, that, because it is not faith, therefore faith may be without it; and that it is not necessarily required in it." I have answered this already. Only, (1) Since here he says again, that he never said as above; yet here he says it anew, upon the matter, by saying, that that imaginary idea is necessarily required in it: Which if it be not the same with its being necessarily included in it, let readers judge. How many times in his letter does he prove, that I had reason to think and say, that his imaginary idea was, according to him, included in faith? Does he not attempt to prove, p. 31. and elsewhere, that an imaginary idea of Christ as man is included in faith, if a right idea of him be included in it? For he makes three things necessary to the right conceiving of Christ, and the first of them is this imaginary idea. So that I did not wrong him, when I judged, that he made that idea of Christ as man to be faith, or a part of it, or included in it: For what he said before, he says again and again; and yet, it seems, does not see, know, or believe what he says: And little wonder where imaginary ideas lead the pen. (2.) Since he here says, that an imaginary idea of Christ as man is required in faith, he should have told us, by what law of God, or rule of right reason, it is required; since reason would rather seem to say, that, instead of corporeal ideas being required in spiritual actings of the soul, it is required, that they be extruded as hinderances thereunto. Since God has endued man with *reason*, and power of reflection, by which he excels all the rest of the creatures, except angels, and which is that faculty of the soul whereby we judge of things, and distinguish good from evil, truth from falshood, and with *understanding* to be conversant about intelligible things, considered as intelligible; it seems very disagreeable to that state and condition of man, to alledge, that it is *required* of him, or *necessarily required* in his actings, that, in matters which are intelligible, he should act sensitively, as brutes do, by sense and imagination terminating upon material objects, as they are material and corporeal: While yet it seems by the law of nature required of *man, as a reasonable creature*, that he act rationally, by the

exercise of reason and understanding, by which he is empowered to think upon matter, in a way that is above matter, or upon the material world of visible and corporeal things, in a way suitable to these intellectual powers God has given him. But to assert, that it is required of men, even in their moral and spiritual actings, or necessarily required in these actings, as if it were *a moral duty that they form imaginary ideas of material and corporeal things*, which men naturally do in common with beasts, that are under no moral government; this seems to be a going quite out of the way of reason, as well as religion. Let us consider Mr. Robe's proof: "Knowledge (says he) is necessary to faith: We cannot receive Christ without it; and yet it is not faith. It may be where faith is not; though faith can never be where it is not. And, if Mr. Erskine, and you, brother Fisher, can take it up, the imaginary conception or idea of Christ in his human nature belongs to the knowledge of the object of faith, which is necessarily presupposed to faith." Here is indeed a confused chaos; it is much if Mr. Fisher or I can take up the sense of it. I question if Mr. Robe can take up the sense of it himself. Here he advances something that is true, and something that is false; but none of them to the purpose: I know not if he understands any of them.

(1.) It is true, that knowledge is necessary to faith, and properly is not faith: Yet in scripture faith is defined by knowledge, Isa. liii. 11. And some of our greatest divines have defined faith by a fiducial knowledge, and said, that faith is *seated in the understanding, in respect of its being and subsistence, and in the will and heart, in respect of its effectual working*. I am not sure if Mr. Robe be acquaint with this doctrine. But, whatever truth is in his words here, it is no way to his purpose, unless he makes the imaginary idea of Christ as man necessary to faith in the manner that knowledge is necessary to it. This he points at. Therefore,

(2.) It is a gross falsehood that he asserts, when he says, That an imaginary idea of Christ in his human nature belongs to the knowledge of the object of faith. Which I prove to be false thus: The imaginary idea of Christ in his human nature is only the corporeal figure of a man in the brain; but the corporeal figure of a man in the brain belongs not to the knowledge of the object of faith: *Therefore*, the imaginary idea of Christ in his human nature belongs not to the knowledge of the object of faith. The *first* of these propositions Mr. Robe cannot deny; for it is his own doctrine, *that imaginary ideas, which respect only corporeal things*. As for *the second, That the* corporeal figure of a man belongs not

the knowledge of the object of faith, this is plain; because the image and figure of a man in the brain is no knowledge at all, neither leads any way to the knowledge of Chriſt, as he is the object of faith: For the knowledge of the object of faith that is preſuppoſed neceſſarily to faith, is a ſpiritual knowledge of the Son of God by ſaving illumination, John vi. 40. *He that hath ſeen the Son, and believed on him, hath everlaſting life.* But the knowledge of Chriſt in his human nature by an imaginary idea is no knowledge, not ſo much as of his human nature itſelf; but only the mental contemplation of the figure of his human body, according as the imagination ſees fit to form it, or according to the meaſure of the *ſpirit of diſcretion that accompanies the image*, as Mr. Robe ſaid above. Here is a dagon that muſt fall before the ark of God. For, while it ſtands, it falſely figures the manhood, but truly disfigures the perſon of our Redeemer, God-man; who, being *God*, hath a right of *propriety* to redeem his *creatures*, and, being *man*, a right of *propinquity* to redeem his *brethren*, and behoved to redeem them as he was God man in one perſon; for the church was to be purchaſed by the blood of God. It was not the divinity alone, nor the humanity alone, that accompliſhed this work. Hence Auguſtine ſays, *Human divinity and divine humanity is the mediatrix between mere divinity and mere humanity.* And Aquinas, That *the humanity of Chriſt is the inſtrument, and the divinity the principal agent in this work.* Here then it may be enquired, Can either human divinity or divine humanity be the object of an imaginary idea? Or, can the agent in the work of our redemption (as I noticed elſewhere) be the object of that idea? If not, then what has faith ado with an image which is not the perſon God-man? The image of Chriſt as man belongs no more to the knowledge of the object of faith, than the image of a *mere man* belongs to the knowledge of an *incarnate God*; or the knowledge of a *viſible* object belongs to the knowledge of a perſon *whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee*, 1 Tim vi. 16. Beſides, to ſay, that an imaginary idea belongs to knowledge, is ſuch a mock upon philoſophy, as if one ſhould ſay, that the corporeal or ſenſitive faculty belongs to the intellectual; which is to confound body and ſoul, animal and rational life: For the objects of mere imaginary ideas afford not materials for underſtanding, the ſubject here ſpoken of. *Locke on human underſtanding*, p. (*mihi*) 288, ſays, "He that hath ideas of ſubſtances diſagreeing with the real exiſtence of things, ſo far wants the materials of true knowledge in his underſtanding, and hath, inſtead thereof, chimeras." Now, Mr. Robe's imaginary idea of Chriſt in his human nature, diſagreeing with the real exiſtence of it, is ſo far

rom belonging to the knowledge of the object of faith, that, ccording to the mind of that noted philoſopher, inſtead of aving the materials of true knowledge in his underſtanding, e has nothing but chimeras. To which purpoſe the ſame uthor ſays, p. 205. " Phantaſtical or chimerical ideas, I call uch as have no foundation in nature, nor have any conformity vith that reality of being, to which they are tacitly referred, s to their archetypes ?" Alas! how much is goſpel doctrine bſcured, when men bring in, inſtead of knowledge and faith, himeras and fancies? Mr. Robe ſeems to renounce here the pinion of Abelard, who maintained, that *faith was nothing but ſtrong fancy*, and yet proves himſelf in fact to be of that ſame pinion. And I wiſh none of the reſt of his opinions may be leaving to him: For Abelard was condemned in a council held at Rheims and Sens in 1140, for making degrees in the Trinity with Arius, dividing Jeſus Chriſt with Neſtorius, preferring ree-will to grace with Pelagius, and mixing his Ariſtotelian hiloſophy with divinity; as Mr. Robe does his imaginary ideas.

Mr. Robe *(ibid.)* proceeds thus: *Some of the mediums or arguments he makes uſe of to prove that an imaginary idea of Chriſt is not faith, are horrid and heretical; ſuch as, that the human nature of Chriſt is no part of the object of faith, becauſe it is the object of the imagination and fancy.* Here Mr. Robe begins his heavy charge, but under a miſerably ignorant miſtake of my argument. If I had ſaid either directly or indirectly, that the human nature, of Chriſt is no part of the object of faith, he might have been excuſed and apologized for: But I appeal to all the world that read my words, if they can bear ſuch a charge. My words, as he here cites them, are, *Can that be any part of the object of faith, which is perceptible by the fancy of every man, and is obvious to natural diſcerning?* Hence Mr. Robe deduces this, *That I make the human nature of Chriſt to be no part of the object of faith, becauſe it is the object of every man's fancy.* But my argument proves the quite contrary of what Mr. Robe aſſerts, namely, *That becauſe the human nature of Chriſt, as it his human nature, ſubſiſting in the perſon of the Son of God, cannot be the object of every man's fancy, nor obvious to natural diſcerning;* therefore *that human nature of Chriſt is only the object of faith, and not of fancy, nor of any imaginary idea.* Nay, that idea, inſtead of including the object of faith, includes no part of it. Every one that hears of Chriſt as man, muſt neceſſarily have the imaginary idea of a man. But is that imaginary idea of a man any part of the object of faith? No. Now, Mr. Robe muſt neceſſarily defend the oppoſite of what I aſſert; and ſo his principle *muſt be, That that which is perceptible by every man's fancy,*

and is obvious to natural discerning, is a part of the object of faith; or that the figure of a man, which he calls Christ presented to the mind by imagination, is a part of the object of faith. If so, this is horrid indeed, and idolatry with a witness. Mr. Robe read my words, as if I had said, *That the human nature of Christ is perceptible by the fancy of every man.* But I never said nor thought so. Nay, I think the human nature of Christ, as it is the object of faith, is imperceptible and inconceivable any other way than by faith; and that an imaginary idea of it, is but a imaginary dream about a myftery that furmounts the conception of all mankind. An imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is no part of the object of faith; becauſe as I have already proven, *Chriſt as man is not God; and God only is the object of faith and worſhip.* It is true, Chriſt is God man But an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, is no part of the knowledge or faith of his being God-man; becauſe a God-man cannot be the object of any imaginary idea, but only of faith. But is not Chriſt manhood or humanity a part of, or rather what relates to the object of faith? Anſwer. Not ſeparately or apart from the divine perſon: And therefore it is no part of the object of faith as it is the object of fancy, or of any imaginary idea; becauſe that fancy or idea cannot conceive of it any other way than ſeparately or apart from the divine perſon; for this good reaſon, becauſe it can conceive of no more than that which is corporeal. Yea, it is impoſſible, according to Mr. Robe himſelf, that an imaginary idea can conceive of any more. The object of it, then, is ſomething corporeal, and no more. But that which is corporeal, and no more, is a part of the object of faith, any more than an image of wood and ſtone is If it is needful to put this argument in form it is thus: That which is nothing but a corporeal thing, cannot be the object of faith, or any part of it: But the object of an imaginary idea, according to Mr. Robe himſelf, is nothing but a corporeal thing; for nothing elſe, he frequently owns can be the object thereof. Therefore that which is the object of an imaginary idea, or of any man's fancy, cannot be the object of faith or any part thereof. The human nature of Chriſt, as it is nothing but a corporeal thing, is neither the true human nature of Chriſt, nor the true object of faith, nor any part of it; for the true object of ſaving faith is only the perſon of Chriſt exhibite in the word, Iſ xlii. 1. Heb. i. 3. and he is that one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus, 1 Tim ii 5.

Mr. Robe's following words, p. 46. at the cloſe, and p. 47 *at the beginning*, are, "Then he proceeds dreadfully to

ſcriptures (and then cites my words.) *Nothing corporeal, nothing ſenſible, can properly be the object which is the evidence of things not ſeen,* Heb. xi. i. &c. he, he evidently aſſerts Chriſt's human nature to f the object of faith, and that it can be no part e, it is the object of every man's fancy or imagin- hen it is abſent; becauſe it is ſenſible, corpore- How dreadful is this!" To which I anſwer, how his ignorance of the man, that hath delivered eſe words, if it be conſidered,

Ir. Robe's doctrine muſt be neceſſarily the reverſe ence his principle is, That *ſomething ſenſible, ſomething viſible, is properly the object of that faith vidence of things not ſeen.* And, if this principle her in common ſenſe or divinity, I appeal to all ers and divines in the world.

be ſays, that I here aſſert *Chriſt's human nature to the object of faith, nor can be ſo; becauſe it is the human's fancy and imagination, now when it is abſent; nſible, corporeal, viſible.* He needed not have add- *it is abſent*; for, though it were preſent to *ſenſe*, ie, however dreadful Mr. Robe may think it, that ble, corporeal or viſible, can be the proper object cauſe it is properly the object of ſenſe. And, be- fancy and imagination in every man can eaſily it is merely ſenſible, corporeal and viſible; there- thus conceived, can be no part of the object of iſe the true human nature of Chriſt, as it is in him, e object of any ſuch imaginary idea or fancy. conclude it is only the object of faith, and not of s was my argument, which Mr. Robe would in- ing, that I evidently aſſert Chriſt's human nature t of the object of faith; becauſe it is the object of fancy. Whereas I ſaid the quite contrary, by a orting the ſtrongeſt negation, *Can that be any part faith that is perceptible by every man's fancy?* inti- the human nature of Chriſt, as it is perceptible s fancy, cannot be any part of the object of faith: the object of faith, it is imperceptible by any ; becauſe it is humanity exiſting and ſubſiſting only of the Son of God. Fancy and imagination can- of humanity exiſting that way; and, when it is y other way, it is no part of the object of faith.

Robe ignorantly miſtakes and miſrepreſents my oth b- ſuppoſing, that I ſaid the human nature the object of every man's fancy, which I never

thought nor said either; and also by inferring from this his own supposition, viz. That it may be the object of every man's fancy, that I deny it to be the object of faith. Whereas the direct contrary is the very import of my words, That, because it is not, and cannot be the object of fancy, it can only be the object of faith. But now, what must Mr. Robe's principle on this head be, in opposition to mine? Namely, That *that which is perceptible by every man's fancy, and is obvious to natural discerning, is part of the object of saving faith.* Such a carnal principle is, in my opinion, directly cross to the mind of God, who says, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.*

However, Mr Robe is confident he is right, and I am wrong; and therefore, after his terrible exclamation, saying, *How dreadful is this!* he brings in this digression, p. 47. namely, "I have frequently said, since this schism began, it was so groundless and unreasonable, I was afraid it would issue in some heresy. And now, alas! it seems to be broaching." Hence I infer, that what he calls a schism, must be a very well grounded and reasonable secession; since, in opposition to his fear, instead of issuing in heresy, it issues in a most necessary detection and discovery of the heresy, idolatry, and blasphemy that is involved in the new doctrine of the imaginary idea of Christ as man. And indeed, since the late delusive work began, it was so directly opposite to our covenanted principles in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, and to any testimony lifted up for it, that there was ground and reason to fear, it would issue in gross error and heresy: Which, alas! is now broached, and published to the world with demonstrations of the greatest ignorance, advanced with the greatest confidence. And no wonder, when men *receive not the love of the truth, that God give them up to strong delusion, to believe lies;* and such lies are all mental images of Christ in his human nature, or imaginary ideas of Christ as man.

One would think, by what follows, Mr. Robe were convicted of his error in what he had advanced above, and were retracting his doctrine of imaginary ideas about Christ as man, in order to preach up Christ in his person, as the only object of faith: For his words are, "Only let the reader consider that a whole Christ *in* his person, and both his natures, is the object of faith, and offered to us in the gospel." And then he bids us hear Mr. Charnock, vol. ii saying, "It is not a faith simply in the Godhead that is required by him, for so he *is the* object of faith in the same manner as the Deity is; nor *simply in his* manhood, for so he is no more the object of faith *than another* man may be; but Christ in his person, God man."

if Mr Robe had ranſacked his library, to find out a
tion of his own error; and a confirmation of my aſſer-
in oppoſition to it, he could hardly have produced
er inſtance than this againſt himſelf, and for me: for
upon the matter my very words, as delivered in the
dix, which Mr. Robe pretends to quarrel and refute:
re I had ſaid, "That, in the act of receiving Chriſt, as
an, to have an imaginary idea of him as man, is to be-
and not believe. It is to receive the perſon of Chriſt,
t to divide the perſon. To receive the God-man, is
but to have an imaginary idea of him as man, is not faith,
belief; for, as man ſimply, he is not the object of faith,
ſenſe or fancy.——It is true, the two natures of Chriſt
inct, and ſo may be ſuppoſed to be the object of diſ-
leas. But neither the one nor the other *ſeparately* are
ject of ſaving faith, but only the perſon God man." I
erefore obliged to Mr. Robe for the foreſaid citation
Charnock; which, in other words, is the very ſame
with what I have here ſaid And, at the ſame time, I
Ir. Robe, or any man, to find the leaſt ſhadow for the
se of imaginary ideas of Chriſt as man, out of theſe
of Charnock, but the quite contrary: For not only
e ſhew therein, that the perſon of Chriſt, as God-man,
only object of ſaving faith, but alſo ſeems to exclude,
erely the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, which can-
nature be any other thing than the idea ſimply of his
od, or rather of his human body; but alſo Charnock
ıHows not even the faith ſimply of his manhood, be-
hus *he is no more the object of faith than another man may*
ſomuch that here he refutes the doctrine of imaginary
. ith a witneſs, in declaring, that, ſhould a man have the
et be the *fancy* of Chriſt's *manhood ſimply*, it is impoſ-
ıat that faith could be ſaving faith, or any part of its
; becauſe thus Chriſt is no more the object of faith than
r man may be. And hence, unleſs Mr Robe ſhall ven-
ı ſay, that another man, as well as Chriſt, or another
od, as well as his, may be a part of the object of ſav-
th, he ſtands refuted here by his own citations out of
ck; whoſe words may ſtare his imaginary idea of Chriſt
ı out of countenance: And all his ignorant arguments
t me, are arguments againſt Charnock's doctrine here.
:er, Mr. Robe cites Flavel next, ſaying, "He that does
Chriſt of his humanity, or yet takes him for a mere man,
receive him aright." To what purpoſe he cites his,
ot underſtand, unleſs he think that ſaving faith, receiv-

ing Chriſt in his perſon God man, does but diveſt him of his human nature, without his imaginary idea of him as man. Whereas faith only can apprehend a whole Chriſt in his perſon, and both natures ſubſiſting therein; while his imaginary idea, though it reſpects one part of Chriſt, *notionally*, yet it cannot apprehend at all any part of him *really*; but in itſelf miſerably divides the object of faith.

Mr Robe proceeds thus: "That Chriſt as man ſimply (according to Mr. Erſkine) is not the object of faith, but of ſenſe and fancy, does not in the leaſt ſay, that his human nature is not a part of the object of faith, as perſonally unite with his divine, tho' it be not the object of faith ſimply in itſelf." Here again Mr. Robe confounds the object of faith and the object of fancy; as if the human nature of Chriſt, as perſonally unite with the divine, could be the object of fancy: Which becauſe I deny it can be ſo, he imagines I deny it can be the object of faith. And hence alſo he is pleaſed to infer that I contradict myſelf: For, ſays he, "If Mr Erſkine here contradict himſelf, it does not leſſen the charge of this groſs error upon him, *That the human nature of the glorious Mediator is no part of the object of faith.*" Anſwer. Here I muſt ſay, that ſince Mr. Robe knows that I deny that the human nature of Chriſt, as it is the object of faith, can be the object of fancy or imagination; for him hence to infer that I deny it to be the object of faith, is ſuch an ignorant and abſurd inference, that I defy the man to believe what he ſays to be truth or to free his own conſcience before God from the guilt of being a falſe witneſs againſt me; otherwiſe his attachment to imaginary deluſions hath ſo blinded his judgment, that he is not capable to underſtand this argument, nor to take up the difference between faith and fancy, or between the ſpiritual object of faith, though reſpecting Chriſt's humanity, and the corporeal objects of ſenſe and fancy. But as it is impoſſible for him to anſwer to God for ſuch a falſe, ignorant, and unaccountable charge againſt me; ſo I ſee ground to be glad, that I am reproached for the name of Chriſt, and for cleaving to the doctrine of faith, in oppoſition to the doctrine of fancy, and that the grand *Accuſer of the brethren* hath not got ſuch a heavy charge laid againſt me, without diſcovering his cloven foot, I mean without diſcovering his inſtruments to be of the ſame ſtamp with Jannes and Jambres, *that reſiſted the truth; men of corrupt minds; reprobate concerning the faith*; or, as it is in the margin, 2 Tim. iii. 8. of no judgment concerning the *faith: And of* whom it is ſaid, verſe 9. *They ſhall proceed no further: for their folly ſhall be manifeſt* unto all men, as their alſo was.

SECT. VIII.

Mr. Robe (p. 48.) cites two paſſages of mine, which he ignorantly ſuppoſes contradict one another, p. 47. 48 "That part of Chriſt which is viſible, was the object of ſenſe on earth, &c." This he cites in oppoſition, and thinks is contradictory to what I ſaid before, namely, as he relates it, That "that part of Chriſt which is perceptible by the fancy of every man, &c cannot be any part of the object of faith." The laſt citation here is not in my words, as they that compare may ſee. But, allowing it to be ſo, "is there not here (ſays Mr. Robe) a contradiction in terms? Let Mr. Erſkine tell us if that part of Chriſt that is viſible, and was the object of ſenſe when he was upon the earth, was not the object of faith then, as perſonally united to the Son of God, and as the inviſible God was ſeen therein and thereby? Was it not ſo to Thomas? John xx. 29. was it not ſo to all other believers who received him, and believed on him then? How then can he ſay, that the object of ſenſe cannot be the object of faith? &c." To theſe, and a number of queſtions to this purpoſe, which diſcover only the ignorance of the queriſt, I anſwer, by aſſerting again what Mr. Robe thinks a contradiction, (though yet it is contradictory to nothing but to his imaginary ideas of Chriſt as man,) That *that part of Chriſt which is viſible, was the object of ſenſe on earth, is the object of viſion in heaven, and may be the object of any man's fancy and imagination; but never was nor ever will be the object of faith,* (nor any part of it,) *but as the inviſible God is ſeen therein and thereby.* Mr. Robe's quarrelling this, flows from his confounding the object of faith and the object of ſenſe, and judging one and the ſame thing may be the object of both. Whereas that which is the object of ſenſe, cannot, as ſuch, be the object of faith; nor can that which is the object of faith, be, as ſuch, the object of ſenſe. The human nature of Chriſt, as it is the object of ſenſe and fancy, is no more but the object of ſenſe and fancy; and cannot, as ſuch be the object of faith: For faith can terminate upon no viſible, ſenſible thing as ſuch; for it is a *knowing of things that paſs knowledge,* Eph ii. 19. *and the evidence of things not ſeen,* Heb. xi. 1. Things ſeen are evident to ſenſe; but faith makes evident things that are not ſeen. Again, the human nature of Chriſt, as the inviſible God is ſeen therein and thereby, is the object of faith only, and cannot, as ſuch, be the *object of ſenſe*; for ſenſe and imagination *terminate upon things corporeal,* and *look to the things that are ſeen*

2 Cor. iv. 18. Mr. Henry, in his comment on that verſe, John xx. 29. ſays, "Thomas as a believer was truly bleſſed; but *rather bleſſed are they that have not ſeen.* It is not meant of not ſeeing the *objects of faith*; for theſe are inviſible, Heb. xi. 1. 2 Cor. iv. 18. but the *motives of faith*, Chriſt's miracles, and eſpecially his reſurrection. Bleſſed are they that ſee not theſe, and yet believe in Chriſt."

Mr. Robe's queſtions here, p. 48. are of ſuch a nature, that I cannot conceive how any man can propoſe them gravely, and yet be reckoned one that underſtands the goſpel, or hath any tolerable uptaking either of philoſophy or divinity; inſomuch that it requires more patience than it does pains, to anſwer and expoſe the ignorance of them. It is no wonder that Mr. Robe ſuppoſe that the humanity of Chriſt was the object of faith on earth, even as it was the object of ſenſe then, when it was *preſent*, ſeeing he makes that humanity the object of faith, even as it is the object of fancy and imagination, now when it is *abſent*. But to ſpeak of an object of *faith* that is properly *viſible*, is no better logic than to ſpeak of an object of ſight or *ſenſe*, that is properly *inviſible*. Yet Mr. Robe's queſtions, which he thinks unanſwerable here, are founded directly upon this abſurdity, and import no more than what is contained in that common, yet ignorant maxim, *That ſeeing is believing*, or that ſenſe is faith: For he ſuppoſes, that all who ſaw Chriſt in the *fleſh*, ſaw ſome part of the proper object of faith; and that all who ſee that fleſh in their imagination, do ſee alſo ſome part of the proper object of faith. But I plainly aſſert, That only thoſe that ſaw Chriſt by faith on earth, and none elſe, did ſee any part of the proper object of faith, even though they ſaw his human body; and that none of thoſe that ſaw Chriſt only with the bodily eyes, and that ſaw no more but his human body, did ever ſee any part of the proper object of faith; becauſe the proper object of faith is the inviſible God. They ſaw not the true Chriſt, even when they ſaw the true body which he had, while they did not ſee him to be an incarnate God, the perſon God man, nor ſee the glory of the inviſible God in him and by him. When the wiſe men that came from the eaſt to enquire for him that was born King of the Jews, if they had worſhipped the babe of Bethlehem, as he was a babe, they had been guilty of idolatry. "But when they fell down and worſhipped him, (ſays Mr. Henry on the place,) we do not read that they gave ſuch honour to Herod, though he was in the height of his royal *grandeur*: But only to this babe they gave this honour, not *only as to a king*, for then they would have done the ſame to

:rod'; but as to *a God: He is thy Lord, worſhip thou him.*" hough they ſaw the babe, yet they had ſeen no part of the oper object of faith or worſhip, if they had not ſeen him to *the Lord*, or *God in our nature*. A corporeal object, whether hand, and preſent to the ſenſe, or at a diſtance, yet preſent fancy, is no part of the proper object of faith, in ſo far as is the object of ſenſe or fancy; for ſenſe and imagination nuot behold it under that conſideration that faith does. he unbelieving multitude that ſaw Chriſt's human body on rth, yet they ſaw no part of the object of faith, even tho' y ſaw Chriſt in the fleſh with their natural eyes, as true lievers did; yet the object of their ſight was quite different. arnock, vol. ii p. 73. quotes John Goodwin ſaying, "The ts of a renewed man and the acts of a natural man, are the ne in the nature of acts. As when a man loves God,—or ver man,—'tis the ſame act of love,—the ſame motions of ſoul, the ſame ſubſtantial acts ſimply conſidered.—But difference lies in the objects: The object of the one is ernatural, the object of the other natural." Here is in- d a paradox: and I will be ſorry if Mr. Robe be not able read the riddle, namely, *The Jews that rejected Chriſt ſaw him, and yet did not ſee him.* The riddle is not mine, (any more an a number of myſteries I have mentioned elſewhere): the Spirit of God ſees fit to make uſe of it no leſs than ſix nes at leaſt in ſcripture. Not only does the apoſtle Paul mploy it, Acts xxviii 26, 27 and Rom xi. 8. from the pro- d Iſaiah, chap. vi 9. but ſo do all the four evangeliſts in hiſtory of Chriſt, Matth xiii 14 Mark iv. 12. Luke viii. and John xii. 40. intimating, that, *in ſeeing they did not ſee.* hey both ſaw Chriſt, and did not ſee him; that is, they the human nature of Chriſt as it was the object of ſenſe, not as it was the object of faith. They ſaw the manhood him who was the Meſſiah, the true Chriſt; but they did ee him to be the Chriſt, nor a knowledge him to be any ing elſe than what they ſaw with their eyes, a mere man. nd ſo what they ſaw was no part of the object of faith or orſhip at all, but of ſenſe. Hence, though it was owing to eir blindneſs that they ſaw no more, yet, if they had wor- ipped merely what they ſaw, they would have been guilty f groſs idolatry, or creature worſhip, while they did not ſee im to be Chriſt, the God man, nor ſee the inviſible God in im. Hence they *ſaw no form nor comeliness*, nor beauty *in him*, ſ. liii 2 Whereas, they that ſaw him by faith, *beheld his ory*, John i 14 "To whom it is ſaid, *Bleſſed are your eyes, r they ſee. Why?* Matth. xiii 11. *Becauſe* to you it is given

to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to them not given. The ancient fathers proved Chriſt's God againſt the Arians from this, That he was the object of d worſhip; and accounted them idolaters for wo ſhipping thus, whom they did not eſteem to be God Such idol would theſe have been who ſaw Chriſt in the fleſh, had worſhipped him, without ſeeing and believing him to be in our nature.

An object of ſenſe cannot as ſuch be the object of f The ſcripture hath ſet theſe two oppoſite to each other *walk by faith, not by ſight.* The foreſaid common phraſe, *ſeeing is believing*, will not hold according to ſcripture, indeed to common ſenſe. Though believing is a kind o ing in ſome reſpect; yet, when faith and ſight are contr tinguiſhed, they differ as much as ſeeing and not ſe Therefore faith is called *the evidence of things not ſeen*; a Chriſt it is ſaid, *In whom, though now we ſee him not, yet beli we rejoice.* If the object of faith were ſeen with the b eye, then it is no more faith, but ſight or ſenſe: Ther that which is the proper object of ſenſe or ſenſation, out or inward, cannot properly be the object of faith. Th is, a man may, as frequently believers have, joy and pe believing: He may have faith and ſenſible joy in the Lo the ſame time; but yet, as thus, he may alſo have godl row and ſpiritual joy at the ſame time, notwithſtandin ſorrow is not joy, nor his joy ſorrow. And thus faith i ſenſe, nor ſenſe faith. They differ many ways; particu in their objects. The object of ſaving faith is Chriſt f ing in the word; the object of ſpiritual ſenſe is Chriſt ing in the heart. They differ as much as a word and a w or as a word believed differs from a work experienced. if the object of ſenſe, as ſuch, cannot properly be the o of faith, or any part of it, even in the moſt ſpiritual ac of believers, how can that be any part of the object of properly, which is perceptible by every man's fancy, an vious to natural diſcerning? To deny this propoſition, to me a denying of common ſenſe; or at leaſt a denyi that which no man of letters, or acquaint with divinity, c do; and a confounding of faith and ſenſe: Which is too done in the practice of chriſtians; and there is little ne a doctrinal blending thereof.

What further pains Mr. Robe is at, p. 48 and 49. to j contradiction and abſurdity upon my words, ſerves on *prove his own* groſs darkneſs and ignorance about the o *of faith* "What? (ſays he, p. 49. 42.) Was not the b body of our dear Redeemer, when preſent to the ſenſes

g disciples upon the earth, sensible, visible, corporeal,
ible and conceivable by natural, carnal men, as much
lievers? And was it not then as much *a part of the*
God man, and the object of faith then, as it is now?"
scarce patience to notice the several absurdities that
contained. Only,

I cannot bear without reluctancy, to hear of a part of
diator, God man. This language discovers very gross
ions of the person of Christ; as if he consisted of sev-
distinct parts, notwithstanding his two distinct natures;
if these where two distinct objects of faith, in believing
Son of God It is true, I had proposed a question, *Can*
ANY PART of the object of faith which is perceptible by the
of every man, and is obvious to natural discerning? But, in
it is not possible to have any imaginary idea of Christ
n, without parting the object of faith, or conceiving of
manhood in and by itself distinct from the Godhead, or
person of Christ, the design of my question, by way of
tude to this gross doctrine, which necessarily separates
ivides the object of faith, was to express myself by a
negation, that an imaginary idea of Christ as man, was
from apprehending the proper object of faith, that it
t so much as form a right conception of that human na-
f Christ, which it necessarily separated from his person,
de the object of its contemplation. My question about
t of the object of faith, as above, might be understood
same sense, as Peter said to Simon the sorcerer, *Thou hast*
t in this matter; or, as Christ said once to Peter, *If I wash*
t, thou hast no part in me. Our Lord, by having no part
tion in him, did not mean, as if he where divisible into
; but that, if he do not wash a man, that man has no in-
in him at all. Even so, when I said, *Can that be any part*
bject of faith that is the object of every man's imaginary idea?
nt, it is not at all the object of faith, nor in the least be-
to it. But I never intended, by that question, to sup-
n the least, that the object of faith, as it respects the per-
Christ, did consist of distinct parts. I was so far from any
ht this way, that I argued against Mr. Robe's imaginary
n this ground, that it divided the person of Christ, the
of faith However, upon the foresaid question misun-
od, Mr. Robe makes improvement, very suitable indeed
imaginary idea of Christ as man, which necessarily di-
the object of faith by speaking of a part of the Media-
od-man and of that which is visible, corporeal, &c. be-
part of him. I am almost ashamed to express what
notion is here imported, as was never expressed b

fore by any divine that I know of. Our Lord Jesus Christ is not made up of distinct parts, though he hath two distinct natures. Our Mediator is not two, but one, 1 Tim. ii. 5 *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* This one Mediator is neither two things nor two persons; being, as some divines express it, both *unum* in the neuter gender, and *unus* in the masculine; that is, one thing, and one person. The two natures of Christ, though remaining for ever two distinct natures, yet are not two things subsisting distinctly in themselves; for the human nature never subsisted in itself, but always, since the incarnation of the Son of God, subsisted in his divine person: And the two natures of Christ were never two persons, but one existing in himself. Hence the schoolmen have proven, that Christ may be said to be *aliquid unum*, and *aliquis unus*; that is, one thing, and one person, having in his two natures only one subsistence and personality. Hence, though we can truly say, the man Christ is God, because we speak of a person; yet none can say the human nature of Christ is God, because then we speak not of the person, but of the assumed nature. And, though the three persons of the glorious Trinity are truly called one God, because of their one divine nature; yet Christ, though he hath two natures cannot therefore be called two things, or two persons; but one, because of that oneness of subsistence and personality, which cannot allow a separate consideration of them, as if the Mediator consisted of different parts; or as if one thing relating to his person could be a part of the object of faith, and not another.

If the person assuming our nature and the nature assumed be one person, then the human nature with the eternal Word is one person. But, though Christ hath two natures in one person, yet neither is God nor man a part of the person; otherwise God the Son, before he assumed our nature, was not a compleat person, but grew so when the humanity was joined with the divinity. The person of Christ is not made up of parts; for thus the parts of any whole might be constitute of what was not before: But thus the divine and human nature in Christ are not united. This union is inexplicable, since the ground and reason of it is not the union of parts. For we may say, no part of that person is God; because this person is not constitute of parts. The human nature is not a part of the person; because the human nature is not God, nor a person. The divine nature in Christ cannot be called a part of *his divine person*, because his divine person does not consist of *parts; and* a person is no part of a person. Nor can the three *persons of the* adorable Trinity be said to be parts of the

Trinity, tho' each of them is a diſtinct perſon of one and the ſame undivided Godhead: Whereas, if God were diviſible into parts, let it be ſpoken with holy fear and reverence, none of theſe parts would be God. But I am afraid of wading too deep into the ocean of this incomprehenſible myſtery, which tranſcends not only human, but all angelic and finite underſtanding; far leſs can any imaginary idea be of any uſe here. To conceive of the human nature of Chriſt as ſuch, without relation to the divine nature, unite with the human in one perſon, as the only, one, undivided ſubject of both theſe natures, is a conceiving of a part, where yet there are no parts: Which is a conception impoſſible, without the greateſt abſurdity. It is a conceiving of Chriſt as man, who, as ſuch, is not God, inſtead of conceiving of the man Jeſus Chriſt, who is God. It is a parting of that which hath no parts, a dividing of that which is one, and whereof unity and individuality is an eſſential property, namely, the perſon of Chriſt, in which the two diſtinct natures are unite; not as two parts of that perſon, but two natures no otherwiſe ſubſiſting but in that ſubject or perſon*. When this is the caſe, O! what a ſtrange ſpirit hath prompted Mr. Robe to write ſo looſely as he does about conceiving of Chriſt as man, even as we do of other men, and of a part of the Mediator, God-man: Which argues groſs darkneſs on this ſubject, ſeeing there is no part of him can be lawfully viewed apart from another; otherwiſe it is not the object of faith, but of fancy and imagination, which ſinfully parts what cannot be parted. Yet,

(2.) Mr Robe ſpeaks of "that part of the Mediator God-man that was ſenſible, viſible, corporeal, and perceptible by natural carnal men, as well as by believers; and was it not (ſays he) the object of faith then, as well as now?" I anſwer, Neither then or now was it ſo; becauſe they that take a parted or divided Chriſt, take nothing of him at all; and they only take him *truly* that take him *wholly*: Yea, true believers that ſaw Chriſt on earth, the viſible and corporeal ſight which they ſaw, was the object of their ſenſe, and not of their faith, except in ſo far as they ſaw the *Word that was made fleſh*, or God in our nature. The *Jews* that ſaw Chriſt, and yet *believed not*, as Chriſt ſays of them, what did they ſee? They could not be ſaid to ſee the object of faith, nor any part of it properly; for they ſaw nothing but a mere man, the object

* *Davenant in Col.* p. 255 Diſputatur a ſcholaſticis, an hypoſtaſis vel perſona Chriſti poſt incarnationem ſit compoſita. Hoc ab illis aſſeritur, non ratione *partium*, *quaſi perſona Verbi* compoſita ſit ex natura humana & *divina*, *tanquam ex partibus*; ſed ratione *numeri*, quia jam ſubſiſtit in *duabus naturis*, *quæ ante incarnationem* ſubſiſtebat ſolummodo in divina.

of ſenſe, whom they took to be a human perſon, was not. Why, but it may be ſaid, did not beli ſaw the perſon, ſee alſo the man, and was it no man that believers and unbelievers ſaw; therefor ſaw that which was a part of the object of faith! They both ſaw the ſame man in a *phyſical* ſenſe, o natural body of Chriſt, in which ſenſe it was not pr obje t of faith, to either believers or unbelievers, l ject of ſenſe, or of mere bodily ſight; but it was n man in a *theological* ſenſe that they both ſaw, for ſaw him by faith, ſaw not mere humanity, but divi ed with humanity, or a man that was God, and wh nature was not the object of faith and worſhip in becauſe it ſubſiſted in the perſon of the Son of Go cauſe the man was God incarnate, or God clothe flesh The manhood thus viewed, was the object o worſhip; but then in this view it was inviſible reaſon, or any other eye but that of faith. Ther was merely viſible to the natural eye, was proper of the object of faith, but of ſenſe, to all onlooker our Lord denies that any *ſaw him*, who did not *ſee* While they ſaw the *man*, but not the *perſon*, they ſ true Chriſt; yea they ſaw nothing of the object of ſee a man, is no part of the object of faith; that i ſee every day. The unbelieving Jews that ſaw earth, ſaw no more but a mere man like themſel ſtill do; and therefore they ſaw no part of the obje but of ſenſe. But to ſee a man who is alſo God, nature ſubſiſting in the perſon of the Son of God, i true Chriſt, and the true object of faith; whoſe thus conſidered, cannot be ſeen by the eye of ſenſe nation, which only can apprehend the object of ſe more.

Again, as nothing inviſible can be the object o nothing viſible can properly be the object of faith, ſible and corporeal. Hence what Mr. Robe furthe here, p 49 is very abſurd, anent *carnal and natur diſcerning and conceiving propoſitions of the word*. I can ſtand how he brings in this here, unleſs he think and propoſitions of the word are viſible and corpo Nay but, ſays he, they are conceived by their rati ties. Why then, one would think, he is off from of imaginary ideas; for goſpel propoſitions cannot ject thereof: But now he is on the ſubject of ratio tellectual ideas; which is a different theme: notice what he ſays. Speaking of propoſitions of

e adds, *Are not these the things of the Spirit of God, and the objects faith, because natural carnal men can receive and discern them tionally*, though *not spiritually*? Here Mr. Robe seems to be ghting with all his might against the word of God, which I ted, namely, 1 Cor ii. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the ings of the Spirit of God*: for they are foolishness to him; neither can know them, because they are spiritually discerned* There is wis- m enough in the scriptures to answer Mr Robe's folly. If all e things of God that the natural man conceives of, be fool- hness to him, then can these things of God, as they are con- ived by the natural man, belong to the objects of faith? o, then the objects of faith would be foolishness. How nstrous and absurd this is, let any man consider Besides, e Spirit of God says, *Neither can the natural man know them, use they are spiritually discerned*. In opposition to which r. Robe seems to say, but they can know them *rationally*, ough not spiritually. Well, but the Spirit of God does not ow of that knowledge that comes by carnal reason in the tural man, with the name of knowledge at all; for, says d, *he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned*. r. Owen, on the Spirit, p 218. speaking on these words, s, "A power of receiving spiritual things is denied [here the natural man] *he cannot know them*, he cannot *receive* em"——He grants, p 219. "it is not the mere literal sense doctrines and propositions of truth that is intended. For stance, *That Jesus Christ was crucified*, is a proposition whose se and import any natural man may understand——And the due investigation of this sense, and judgment thereon ncerning truth and falsehood, lies that use of reason in reli- ous things, which some would ignorantly confound, with ability of discerning spiritual things in themselves, and eir own proper nature. This therefore is granted; but it denied that a *natural man* can receive the things themselves. here is a wide difference between the mind's receiving doc- ines *notionally*, and its receiving the things taught in them *ally*:——For really, saith our apostle, they cannot, &c." nd afterwards, p. 221. "This power to receive spiritual hings, must be spiritual and supernatural, &c." Spiritual hings cannot be seen but with spiritual eyes. Charnock, ol i. p. 4 says, "Faith indeed is properly of things above

* He doth not say a carnal man, (says Charnock, vol. 2. p 514) but animal, a souly man; he doth not speak of one led by the affections of he flesh, but those men that are led by flashy reason, and by the common limited wisdom and *principles* of the world, and order their lives ac- *cording to the rational dictates* of the world's wise men receives not the *ings of the Spirit of God*, &c.

reaſon, purely depending upon revelation. What can b
monſtrate by natural light, is not ſo properly the obje
faith." Can Mr. Robe think that author whom he quo
much, is of his mind, that the object even of ſenſe and ſu
the object of faith? Nay, ſays Charnock, ibid. p. 342. "
goſpel is a myſtery, and myſteries ſurmount human rea
But, ſays Mr. Robe, ibid. "Cannot the ſame things b
object of, or diſcovered to us by both reaſon and revel
as the creation of the world, and many other things?"
alſo he propoſes to ſhew how he, viz. Mr. Erſkine, advi
"what never man of ſenſe or reaſon advanced befo
That the ſame thing cannot be the object of ſenſe, of re
and of faith." Now, though Mr. Robe here ſeems to be l
ing from the purpoſe in hand, relating either to the obj
imaginary ideas, or of ſaving faith; yet it is to my pur
to acquaint him, that, though *ſenſe*, *reaſon* and *faith* m
converſant about the ſame objects *materially*; yet what
object of one of theſe faculties, cannot be the object o
other *formally* or *properly*.

This diſtinction, (that I may put in order what Mr.
ſpeaks of ſo confuſedly); this diſtinction, I ſay, betwixt th
conſidered *materially* and *formally*, is almoſt natural to all
kind, even thoſe that never learned any ſchool logic.
work of a watch *materially* conſidered, is only ſo many p
of braſs or matter, that is the object of any man's *ſenſe* o
ing or feeling; but, *formally* conſidered in its artful co
ſure, and how the ſpring influences the croſs motions of a
wheels, and theſe influence the exact motion of the po
to the hour, in this reſpect, it is the object of *reaſon*, a
tional reflection; and it requires ſome natural underſta
and judgment to apprehend theſe materials in their m
connection, relation to, and influence upon each other.
the matter and form are herein objects of different facu
Materially conſidered, it is the object of ſenſe, ſo as a ſe
child, that wants the exerciſe of reaſon, can ſee, and ha
and play with it: But, *formally* conſidered, it is a pie
curious art and mechaniſm, it is an object of natural k
ledge and rational conſideration. That which is the obj
ſenſe, or is ſeen merely by the eye of the body, is not th
mal object that is ſeen by the eye of reaſon, and that
is the proper object of the eye of reaſon, is not the p
and formal object that is ſeen by the eye of ſenſe.

Thus ſenſe, reaſon, and faith differ. The eye of ſenſ
things materially, and corporeally: The eye of reaſon m
the ſame things; not in the ſame manner, but formall
under ſome rational conſideration. But the eye of fa

s things that are the objects of ſenſe and reaſon; it ſees
t, I ſay, under any ſenſible or merely rational conſid-
properly, but in another light, viz. as they are put into
of truths, propoſitions, records, or teſtimonies, human
e. Hence the objects ſeen by the eye of ſenſe, are proper-
art of the object ſeen by the eye of reaſon; and the objects
n are no part of the proper object of faith: And conſe-
that which is the proper object of faith, is no part of the
object of ſenſe or imagination, nor even of mere natural
. Theſe three may be expreſſed in the words, ſenſation,
ion, faith. The firſt relates to outward corporeal objects,
ſeen outwardly by ſenſe, or inwardly by imagination. The
d relates to objects conſidered intellectually, and under intel-
le conſiderations, or to be viewed by reaſon and rational
tions. The third relates to neither of theſe properly, but
ings as they are revealed and laid out, upon ſufficient ground
edibility, to be the objects of faith.

hatever then be the ſubject-matter, if it be ſuch as ſenſe,
n, and faith can all have ſome concern in; then ſenſe looks
in a *corporeal* way, reaſon in a *diſcurſive* way, but ſaving
ivine faith in a *ſpiritual* and *ſupernatural* way; ſo as it can-
e the object of faith, as it is the object of ſenſe, nor as it is the
of mere natural reaſon. Thus, that which is viſible, ſen-
and corporeal in Chriſt's human nature, which Mr. R. be
the object of his imaginary idea, and would alſo warp in to
object of faith; yet as it is the object of ſenſe and imagina-
cannot be the formal nor proper object of faith, which con-
of it as ſenſe and imagination cannot do, namely, not in a
real or *natural* way, but in a *ſpiritual* and *ſupernatural* man-
while it apprehends Chriſt's whole human nature, ſoul and
ſubſiſting, not *phyſically* or *naturally* in itſelf, like other men,
yperphyſically and *ſupernaturally* in the divine perſon of the
f God, *God manifeſted in the fleſh* by an ineffable myſtery.

is much is neceſſary in anſwer to theſe bold words of Mr.
's in this ſame 49th page, where he alledges, *I advance what
man of ſenſe or reaſon advanced before, That th. ſame thing
be the object of ſenſe, of reaſon, and of faith.* I have ſhewed,
how it can be, and how it cannot be; while he hath left
der to confound all theſe together, and ſo to make no dif-
e between faith and fancy, religion and reaſon; nor, con-
ntly, between devotion and deluſion.

SECT. IX.

re Mr. Robe proceeds, p. 49. to ſpeak of the ſcripture, which
, I abuſe, torture, *and wreſt.* A very heavy accuſation,
e true, without telling here what theſe ſcriptures are. W

says, "he will answer me in the words of Arnoldus upon John xx. 27." I would be loth to say of Arnoldus's *Lux in tenebris* as some foreign divines, calling it *tenebræ in luce*. I am of quite another mind, even though I think the passage Mr. Robe cites and translates *from* him, casts not very much light upon the text in his answer to the objection, *How can it be said, because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed*, seeing *faith is the evidence of things not seen?* Heb. xi. 1. and according to Augustine, What is faith? *To believe what thou dost not see.* Though what he says in answer hereto, is much more prolix and obscure than Pool, Henry, Marlorat, and others upon that text and context, clearly showing the difference between the proper objects of faith, that are invisible, and all the objects of sense; and how the Lord Jesus here condescends to accommodate himself to Thomas's fancy; not to make sense the ground of his faith, which cannot be; but to confirm the little faith he had, and reprove his unbelief, in waiting to found his belief upon the evidence of sense; which is properly no believing (says Pool) otherwise than sense confirms what we have before received upon divine revelation: Yet I see no word that Arnold hath in this place, that any way disagrees with what I have said, but rather establishes it, namely, that some things may be the object of sense in one respect, and the object of faith in another; but that they never can be the objects of faith in that respect wherein they are the objects of sense; and that things which may be known both by faith and sense, can never be the objects of faith properly, as they are known by sense. Thus the human body of Christ on earth, though it was in some respects both the object of faith and sense; yet, as it was the object of sight, whether to believers or unbelievers, was never the object of faith properly; because it could never be the object of faith and worship properly and formally, but as the invisible God was seen therein and thereby; in which respect it was never the object of sense and imagination. So that any who please to compare Arnold's words and mine, will see them holding with the sense I put upon that text, Heb. xi. 1. *That faith is the evidence of things not seen*; that the proper objects of it are invisible. And it will be found, that the faith Mr. Robe pleads for, is no faith at all, but sense or fancy, when he makes it to have properly a visible object.

Mr. Robe (p. 50.) seems to own that carnal conceptions of Christ are contrary to faith, and that the scriptures I mentioned, were but fitly brought in to prove that: But none of them proves (he says) what he confidently affirms, that an imaginary idea of Christ in the understanding, by the help of imagination, is carnal *and* fleshly. Where, also he thinks, my words bear, that a *carnal notion of* Christ's flesh and blood, or human body, and an *imaginary idea* thereof, were the same things. And here he does *not wrong* me; for I own, I do make them one and the same

ning. But he thinks I do ſo without the leaſt proof; and that thus I endeavour to impoſe upon the unſkilful and unwary reader. I do affirm indeed, That an imaginary idea of Chriſt in the mind, by the help of the imagination, is carnal and fleſhly; and I think in this time I have proved it, both by ſcripture and reaſon; and, by Mr. Robe's own acknowledgement, that his imaginary idea is to have no other object but what is carnal, fleſhly, and corporeal. I do affirm alſo, That an imaginary idea of Chriſt's fleſh and blood and human body, and a carnal notion thereof, are one and the ſame thing. Mr. Robe hath, by what I have ſaid, proved to me, and that it is not ſpiritual: and, if ſo, it muſt either be carnal, or neither carnal nor ſpiritual: And, if it be neither of theſe, then it ſeems to belong neither to heaven nor earth; and, if ſo, then it muſt either belong to hell, or to nothing. But ſo very wrong is Mr. Robe that I am wrong, in thinking that a carnal notion and an imaginary idea of Chriſt's human body is the ſame thing, that his following words are, p. 51. *When he gives any proof of this, it ſhall be anſwered. But this I do not expect he will do in haſte; for all that he ſaith againſt carnal fleſhly views of Chriſt, doth not touch as come near the preſent queſtion, and ſaith nothing againſt ſuch idea and conception of our Lord's humanity as is according to the word, and which we cannot have but by the help of our imagination, as hath been ſo often mentioned.* I anſwer, Too often indeed, to the ſcandal of religion, hath this abſurd doctrine been mentioned; but more particularly here while Mr. Robe ſays, that, *when I give proof of this, it ſhall be anſwered*, it muſt argue a ſtrong deluſion he is under, that he is reſolved to cleave to it, though *proof* be given againſt it. But, though he does not expect proof, yet if it be once given, and be really *proof*, he ought to yield to truth proven, and not rebel againſt the light, nor reſolve to believe lies. But, when he here ſpeaks of ſuch *an idea of Chriſt's humanity as is according to the word, and which we cannot have but by the help of our imagination*, I would fain know, what he means by ſuch an imaginary idea of Chriſt's humanity as is *according to the word?* What I aſſerted I proved from ſcripture. But he, *not receiving the truth in love*, hath rejected my proofs. But where will he find a ſcripture for proving the neceſſity of an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, in order to believe in him as God-man? As this is impoſſible, ſo it is intolerable, that he ſhould father his idolatrous fancies upon the word of God, by a mere and bare aſſertion, that it is *according to the word.* It would ſeem he had not full freedom to aſſert this; and therefore did not call it the word of God. For indeed to maintain, in order to faith in Chriſt, the abſolute neceſſity of an imaginary idea of him as man, is neither to bear witneſs that he is *God*, nor that his word is the word of *God*. *Yet, by ſaying it is according to the word*, he either impoſes upon his readers, or wills them to underſtand it is the word

of God he means. But, *search the ſcriptures*, ſays Chriſt; *f they teſtify of me*, John v. 39. namely, *that I am God*. His hea ers there made no queſtion but that he was a *man*; for as ſu he was the object of their preſent ſenſe; but *they ſought kill him*, becauſe he made himſelf *equal with God*, verſe 1 therefore he refers them to the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtamen teſtifying, that he is God, ſuch as that, Iſai. xlv. 22. *Look to m and be ſaved, all ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no elſe*: But their ſenſitive idea of him as a preſent man, togeth with Mr. Robe's imaginary idea of him as an abſent man, ſo f as they did and do take place, land in a direct oppoſition to a wi neſſing that he is God, or God-man in one divine perſon. T word of God never did nor will patronize ſuch a vile, abomin ble, or vain imagination. However natural it is in itſelf, y as applied to the act or object of faith, it is neither ſpiritual n divine, nor any way agreeable to God's holy word, nor any w ſib to the *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chr* Eph. i. 17.

And, inſtead of being helpful to faith, it is hurtful and preju cial to it. To which Mr. Robe anſwers, p. 51. "It does n hurt and hinder, but help the ſaving view of the God-man, and believing view of the glorious perſon of our Immanuel, God w us. So thought Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Durham, as aſſer above; and all others who underſtood what they ſaid, and f what they underſtood." Here Mr. Robe ſtudies to hide his ſha under the covert of theſe excellent names, *Rutherford* and *D ham*. But, as I have above ſhewed, they were never ſo void underſtanding, as to deliver themſelves in ſuch terms as M Robe does on this ſubject: So I hereby defy him, or any man, produce a divine, before theſe late deluſive times, and of any n in the chriſtian world, doing ſo.

Mr. Robe ſays, p. 52. in anſwer to ſome of my words, "Th though we do not believe till we behold his glory, as the only gotten of the Father, [as I aſſerted from John i. 14. *The W was made fleſh, and we beheld his glory*;] yet (ſays he) an imagi ary idea of that fleſh is no unprofitable fancy, becauſe we c have no underſtanding of that propoſition, *The Word was m fleſh*, without it." Now, here he expoſes his own ignorance, neither underſtanding what he himſelf ſaid, nor ſaying what underſtands: For, he having ſo often told, that the object of imaginary idea can be nothing but what is only corporeal, it impoſſible, in a conſiſtency with this, for him to underſtand hi ſelf. By fleſh here we are to underſtand the human nature Chriſt, as it is aſſumed into a perſonal union with the eter *Word*, *the Λόγος*: But fleſh under this conſideration is ſuch *myſterious*, ſpiritual, and ſupernatural object of faith, that it *by no means* be the object of any imaginary idea, without co

ring it as a thing merely and only corporeal; which is so horrid (*horresco referens!*) as might fright any christian ear. But next, whereas Mr. Robe says, "We can have no understanding of that proposition, *The Word was made flesh*, without an imaginary idea of that flesh;" that is, and must be, according to him, in a corporeal sense; now, I would ask, Is this proposition a corporeal object? If this *truth*, That the *Word was made flesh*, or any other *truth* whatsoever, be a corporeal object that can be painted on the brain by an imaginary idea, pray let him tell, what image it hath? what it is like? or what form and figure can be given it? Nay, he can as soon paint the sound of a trumpet, as paint upon his mind by imagination the joyful sound of this truth, That the *Word was made flesh*. Therefore I may say to him with the poet, *Et si vis similem plagere, pinge sonum.* Nay but, says he, we may have the imaginary idea of flesh; for that is corporeal, like other human bodies. Then I would ask, what help doth this imaginary idea of flesh give to the understand of this truth, *That the Word was made flesh?* It is not the meaning of the truth, but only the image of the corporeal thing called flesh or humanity that it gives; that is, that by flesh we are not to understand a house, or a rock, or a mountain, but just the thing that every one knows by the name of flesh, or a human body. Now, if this be not an unprofitable fancy, when mixed in with faith, then let it be considered, what help it gives to the faith or knowledge of this proposition, That *the Word was made flesh*, to have an imaginary idea of flesh. Just as much help as if I should advance this proposition, *That the Vatican is a house full of books; but you can have no understanding of this proposition, without an imaginary idea of a house.* This hath some truth in it; and yet is so much out of purpose, that none who understand what they are saying, would gravely express themselves so, especially on a divine subject. I have said, that to see Christ savingly, and without a delusion, is not to see flesh, but God manifested in the flesh. To which Mr. Robe answers, "Though it be not to see flesh only; yet we cannot see him, God manifested in the flesh, without seeing flesh, or an idea and conception of that flesh in which God is manifested." To which I reply, True; we cannot indeed see him as God manifested in the flesh, without seeing flesh by faith, I grant; which is a seeing his human nature subsisting in his divine person. But Mr. Robe speaks of seeing flesh by an imaginary idea of that flesh: Whereas no natural idea whatsoever can see this flesh, as faith does; because this flesh or human nature of Christ is no carnal thing subsisting in itself, by the will of the God of nature, as other natural things do: Therefore no natural eye can see it, *nor natural ideas* conceive it to be what it really is, *but only the spiritual* eye of faith, which is the evidence of *things not seen.*

Mr. Robe, p. 53. after citing some of my words, gives what he calls precisely the whole strength of my argument: And, tho he touches it in part, yet (there is some unfair representation o my mind; for, though I said, that true faith will have nothin to do with a half Christ; yet I do not love, for reasons alread given, to hear my words represented, as if I had spoke of a hal of Christ's manhood) his answer deserves to be animadverted upon And, (1.) He says, "We may have an imaginary idea, without thinking that moment upon him as God, and separating his man hood from his Godhead, and thinking upon a false Christ; eve as we may think upon him as God, without any thought the moment of his manhood; and yet do not think upon a false Christ or separate his Godhead from his manhood." This he endeavour to illustrate from the attributes of God, which are himself; an yet, says he, "I do not think upon a false God, when I think upon his eternity, without thinking upon his immensity, when I think upon his omnipotence without thinking upon his omnipre sence; because my finite mind and capacity can do no other."

Here Mr. Robe alledges, we may think of Christ as man, with out thinking of him as God, and yet think on the true Chri *Answer.* We cannot think believingly on Christ as man, wi precision or abstraction. As faith cannot apprehend one per of the glorious Trinity, so as to abstract from the other two, b cause of the undivided nature and essence of the Godhead; so cannot apprehend the human nature of Christ abstractly from divine, because of his undivided personality. It will be own the imaginary idea is only of Christ as man, or his human And this is owned also with reference to the imaginary ide any man, regenerate or unregenerate. The natural idea even a spiritual man is not faith, nor helpful to it, but hurtful; b cause it necessarily separates the object of faith, which looks the person, and not to one nature only: Yea, that idea looks on to the human nature, and not to the divine. Indeed faith m look more directly in its actings to one nature than another, f example, of the human nature; but then this look of faith *inclu* and *implies* a looking also to the divine nature, (though not expressly); because faith looks to him through the *glass of* t word, and in the light of the Spirit, which cannot give a view a false or a half Christ, but only of a true and a whole Chri And hence, though faith may act more directly upon Christ as *Priest*, for pardon, at all times, under the sense of the *guilt* of and not so directly upon him as a *King*, which it may do at anoth time, under the sense of the *power* of sin; yet its actings u Christ in one office, includes and implies an acting upon the o *offices; because* it is the act of saving faith, which includes all *offices.* Though it be acting upon Christ as a Priest, which is *tifying faith;* yet, because justifying faith is also saving faith

includes, I say, an acting upon the other offices also, though not so explicitly at that time. But this cannot be said of an imaginary idea, that, when by it we think upon Christ as man, it includes an idea of Christ as God; for the idea cannot reach to such a height.

As to the attributes of God which we cannot conceive but separately, the same may be said as above: The saving faith of one attribute includes and implies the faith of all his other attributes that are essentially one with it: Though we do not so explicitly apprehend the rest at the same time; yet we do it implicitly. (Whereas an imaginary idea of one object does not imply the idea of any other object at the same time; unless that idea be under the conduct of understanding; without which fancy is not capable to apprehend any relations or connections, even in natural things). Hence, as in scripture he that sees Christ by faith, is said to see the Father, the believing knowledge of Christ implies the believing knowledge of the Father. It is not said, he that seeth Christ (as Mr. Robe means) by one idea, viz. of imagination, ascends to the Father by another, viz. of understanding: No; but the saving sight of Christ involves in it the sight of God; and so of all the perfections of God in him; though not explicitly all of them at once, but perhaps only this or that attribute; yet implicitly all, because it sees God in him. This is what cannot be said of an imaginary idea. Thus he that breaks one command is said to break them all: A sin against any one command, is a sin against all the commands; because the authority is contemned by which they are all enjoined. Hence, according to scripture, one sin discovered in the light of the Spirit of God, implies a discovery of all sin; as, when the woman of Samaria was convicted of her adulteries, she then saw, as in a map, all her sins, and therefore said, John iv. 29. *Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did.* As when one looks but to one city in a map of the whole earth, by looking to that, he sees the whole; so, when God by his Spirit shews to a man, in the glass of the word, any one particular sin, though that be most directly looked to; yet, at the same time, he sees a whole world of wickedness that is in his nature, heart, and life. When Moses said, *Shew me thy glory*, God says, *I will make all my goodness pass before thee*; though Moses could not see all directly and explicitly, but only by parts as it were; yet what he saw, did imply all. Now, unless Mr. Robe can shew, that his imaginary idea of Christ as man, does imply an idea of the whole person, which he owns he cannot do, then his adducing these instances of our conceiving one attribute of God, and not another, at the same time, does not answer his purpose. For, as faith's view of the human nature of Christ, being still scriptual and spiritual, imports necessarily in it *a view of his person; so* faith's view of the power of God, for example, *necessarily imports* a view of all his other perfections in

plicitly, because it does not view that power abstractly, as power, but as it is the power of God, or the power of an infinitely perfect being, which ingrosses all perfections in his nature. Thus, of other attributes of the divine Majesty, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, &c. when one is viewed, all are viewed indirectly and consequentially; because faith and spiritual reason have eyes to see consequences in a moment, which no imaginary idea ever had.

Mr. Robe, p. 54. speaks *of such an idea of Christ as man, as that, if it exclude his Godhead, it would altogether hinder faith, instead of helping it.* This he says he abhors. But what if I assert, and it is plain from what I just now said, that an imaginary idea of Christ as man, does in itself, and in its own nature exclude, the Godhead? Whether the man that hath that idea, by another act of his mind, conceive of his Godhead, or not, and whether the man abhor that idea, or not; yet that imaginary idea of Christ as man, in its own nature, includes no more than his manhood, or human body, according to Mr. Robe's own confession. And how an imaginary idea that can go no farther, can be helpful to faith, in conceiving of his Godhead, is to me inexplicable. But, lest Mr. Robe should say, I impute errors to him which yet he professes to abhor, I may answer to this as H. Alting to the Lutherans, objecting thus: "These errors we neither own nor teach, but with our whole souls renounce and detest." His answer is, "Neither do we impute them to you, because the law of charity won't allow us to do so; but we only shew what can be gathered by necessary consequence from your principles, that, when the fountains of such errors are detected, you may reject that doctrine you have so unfairly embraced." Even so say I.

But, says he, p. 54 *Where that idea ends, the understanding proceeds to conceive of him by a different way of conceiving*, &c. I confess, I cannot conceive of what Mr. Robe thinks he conceives about this matter; and I can hardly conceive that he himself can conceive what he says. One must think, that the imaginary idea of Christ's humanity, which, according to him, leads the way, is a thing that he owns is without understanding; but, where it ends, the understanding proceeds. This is a sort of divinity I never saw in the Bible, nor read in any author before. Indeed I think the imaginary idea of Christ as man, which, as I said, in itself includes no more for its object, and proceeds no farther, as Mr. Robe owns, is a thing without understanding; and so far we agree; and therefore can do no good, but hurt to faith. But sure I am, the faith by which we apprehend the humanity of Christ as subsisting in his person, is not without understanding; but is an intelligent and judicious act. And a spiritually enlightened *understanding* is as necessary to conceive the mysterious humanity *of Christ, which* subsists not but in the divinity, as it is necessary *to conceive* of the divinity itself. And, since the imaginary idea

this cafe includes nothing but the image of a mere corporeal bject, it gives nothing but a miſhapen notion of this myſtery, hich is inconceivable, and which alone is the object of faith.

It is not Mr. Erſkine then, but Mr. Robe that makes the human ature of Chriſt not the object of faith. He makes it the object f an imaginary idea, which, it ſeems, he reckons can comprehend t. This idea, he ſays, "*goes as far as it can*, namely, to conceive f Chriſt as man; and, then *where it ends, the underſtanding pro-eeds* to an idea of a different nature, to conceive of him as God, and then as God-man, without an imaginary idea." Whence, it ſeems, he reckons the human nature of Chriſt neither properly the object of faith nor of underſtanding, but of an imaginary idea, diſtinct from faith and ſpiritual underſtanding both. Whereas I aſſert, That the human nature of Chriſt, (not by itſelf, which is a *non-ens*, but) as it ſubſiſts in the perſon of the Son of God, is not, and cannot be the object of fancy and imagination, but only the object of faith. To conceive of the natural manhood of Chriſt by itſelf, or to have an imaginary idea of that, is indeed a vain imagination; becauſe it is a thinking of that which never was and never will be; for that human nature never did ſubſiſt, nor ever will, but in that manner wherein faith alone can apprehend it. To abſtract from this manner of its ſubſiſtence, and think upon matter only, or the material fleſh, and make that the object of faith, is groſs idolatry. But to think upon it as we ought, that is, without abſtracting from the manner of its ſubſiſtence in the Son of God, is impoſſible; it is a conceiving what is inconceivable: And therefore cannot be the object of any imaginary idea, but only the object of faith. And, if the objects of faith are more ſure and certain than thoſe that are the objects of fancy and imagination, which have no reality but in a man's notion, as the caſe is here; and, if Mr. Robe's opinion leads thus to the error of Marcion and his followers, who denied the verity of Chriſt's human nature, ſaying, he was only man in appearance, and not in reality, I leave it to others to conſider. It is true, he hath aſſerted once and again, That Chriſt was truly man, having a true body and a reaſonable ſoul: But, if his true and real manhood never did really ſubſiſt in itſelf, nor had any real ſubſiſtence but in the perſon of the Son of God, which only is the object of faith, Mr. Robe's imaginary idea of it, which cannot conceive of his humanity as thus ſubſiſting, ſeems to border on denying, or not believing the real ſubſiſtence of this humanity; and, conſequently, according to him, or his doctrine, the real humanity of Chriſt is not the object of faith, while he makes it the object of fancy and imagination. To ſee the humanity of Chriſt without a myſtery, is indeed a vain imagination; *for great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh.* And to deny the myſtery of

his humanity, is to deny the reality of it. The human b
Christ, which alone is the object of an imaginary idea, c
as such, be the object of faith, but only of sense, as I ha
declared. To say that it is not the object of sense, is to
that it is a true body, such as can be seen and handled, as
bids Thomas do: By which he declared it to be an object of
in which respect it cannot be supposed to be the object of
without supposing an absurdity, and destroying the very
of it as a human body. And to make it, as such, the ob
faith, is (as I have also said before) to confound faith and
and the object of faith with the object of fancy.

But, though an imaginary idea can separate the humanit
the divinity, and so separate the object of sense from the ob
faith, or rather make Christ, the object of faith, nothing b
object of sense or imagination, which is a sinful prescindi
abstraction of the one from the other; yet faith cannot mak
precision. It cannot conceive of his human nature by itse
cause it conceives of it as the human nature of the Son of
that is, human nature subsisting in his person, or an inc
God; which no natural idea, simple or complex, can do; b
it is not the spiritual eye by which such an object can be see
ing incomprehensible. Now, to conceive by faith of the h
nature of the Son of God, is not to think of his humanity
self; for that, as I said, is to divide the object. Hence
argue, That which would destroy the very notion of Christ
ing a true body, cannot be truth. But to suppose that the
of Christ which is visible and corporeal, is not the object of
of faith, tends to destroy the very notion of its being a true

Mr. Robe makes (p. 55.) the body of Christ, abstract fro
soul, the only proper object of an imaginary idea; which I
cannot extend to the soul. Thus he strengthens my argu
in saying, that that which is the object of every man's fanc
not be the object of faith; because it is only the object of
that can be seen with eyes, felt with hands, &c. To make
object of faith, and not of sense, would be to destroy the
of its being a true body, and to fall in, as I said just now
the gross error of the Marcionites, that made it but an ima
body, a shadow; or the Ubiquitarians, that made his body
every where; or the Papists, in their arguments for transubst
tion, that make it edible, yea to be really eaten in the sacra
although, it be only in heaven now; and *who* answer
Protestant arguments against that real presence, by alledg
is an incomprehensible mystery, and a proper object of faith
opposition to all such imaginary dreams, it is necessary to
That the mere natural body of Christ is properly the ob
sense, not of faith; otherwise the Papists were justifiable
chipping the host, the bread in the sacrament, if it were

Christ, and the proper object of faith. From which gross
y may God deliver these lands, when the hands of such
rs are thus strengthened by Protestant divines, making
man nature of Christ, as it is visible, material, and corpo-
real as it is the object of an imaginary idea, to be the proper
of faith. If Mr. Robe make it (as he seems to do else-
:) the object both of faith and sense, this were to make it
corporeal and incorporeal, visible and invisible: Whereas
's objects are all invisible; *it being the evidence of things not*
Heb. xi. i. insomuch that, though Christ's human body
again on earth, it would be the object of sight and sense, as
it is of imagination, but not of faith. For, when faith acts
relation to it, it cannot apprehend it (as sense does) under any
ible or corporeal consideration, but the contrary. Yea, true
th believes it to be an object, not of faith, but of sense and
t; because it believes it to be a true body. And hence it is
possible for true faith to believe that that true body is in itself
no object of faith; because faith's belief that it is a true body
t can be seen, touched, handled, or that it is an object of sense
d sight, and not of faith properly; faith's belief of this, I say,
founded upon a divine testimony, declaring that it is a true body:
hich testimony is indeed the object of faith; but not the true
dy itself, which is the object only of sense or imagination.
Again, while Mr. Robe says, *(ibid)* "That though an imagin-
idea of Christ [O strange language!] can extend no farther
the human nature of the Mediator, [he should have said the
man body;] yet it is helpful to our thinking of him justly,
to the receiving him as God-man, insomuch as it goes as far
it can." How far is that, may I enquire? Even as far as it
is to dishonour our Immanuel God-man, Redeemer, by conceiv-
of him under a bodily form or image; for it can view him in
part of his spirituality, human or divine, I mean, neither in
human soul, nor divine nature; nor put so much honour upon
, as to conceive him to be a person; far less such a person as
is! And therefore is so far from helping, that it altogether
ders faith, till it be banished away, that faith may act upon
proper object. If Mr. Robe therefore abhors such an idea as
ndes the true object of faith, he should abhor his own doctrine
imaginary ideas, which, in their own nature, and according to
self, exclude every thing that is not corporeal, and include
thing but what is so. And hence he finds himself obliged to
: "Where that imaginary idea ends, the understanding pro-
s": that is, to another way of conceiving of him, whereby
may be conceived and understood to be God and man in one
son. This plainly enough imports, what is true, that Mr.
e, by his imaginary idea of Christ as man, cannot so much as
rstand that he is man; for, where that idea ends, *understand-*

ing begins. Whence one would think his mind is, that understanding must begin with ignorance, or proceed to conceive Christ as God-man, upon an idea that has no understanding; conceive him to be either God or man. And indeed a blind or image in the head, being a *teacher of lies*, can teach no these truths; and therefore must be a very blind guide to understanding. Surely no man that has the eyes of his understanding open, will chuse such a guide.

But, says Mr. Robe to the same purpose, a few lines after, "Now, is that kind of idea, whereby I conceive of Christ as man, hurtful, because it cannot think of him as God, but must leave the understanding to do it, and go on with conceiving him as God, and on his person, [that is, God-man,] without imaginary ideas; or, [as he says above] without the help of species presented from the imagination, as in the first case?" Now, here some things deserve to be remarked. 1*st*, Mr. Robe again makes Christ as man the object of an imaginary idea, and not the object of understanding; for he leaves it to the understanding to think of him as God, and to think on his person, that, by his own confession here, his imaginary idea cannot think of Christ as man *with*, but must do it *without* understanding. Which may make one think strange, how he can make that the object of *faith* which he does not allow to be the object of understanding. 2*dly*, At the same time one would think he makes the imaginary idea to have some understanding and rational knowledge in it; because he says, it leaves the understanding to do what it cannot do: Which seems to import some more wit, than he can allow it, as it is a faculty conversant about no other but corporeal objects. Yet, 3*dly*, He is clear that it can neither conceive of Christ as God, nor as he is God-man in one person; in which respect only I assert he is the object of faith. But Mr. Robe cannot allow this; because I do not allow his imaginary idea, or the object of it, to have any share in this matter. And yet so contradictory to himself must he be, that he is obliged to come over to my side, and assert the same thing of *understanding* that I do of *faith*. For, 4*thly*, He says, that, when the imaginary idea leaves the understanding to do what it cannot do, then the understanding leaves the imaginary idea, and does all without it: For his words are, "That idea cannot think of him as God, but must leave the understanding to do it, and to go on with conceiving of him as God, and of his person, *without any imaginary idea.*" Here then Mr. Robe seems to be of my mind. Is it possible for the understanding to conceive of Christ as God, and God-man in one person, *without any imaginary idea of Christ man?* And is it lawful for Mr. Robe to say so? and yet unlawful for me, yea, according to him, blasphemous and heretical, to [illegible]

e ſame that he ſays? If there be any crime here, then it ay be ſaid, *Turpe eſt doctori, cum culpa redarguit ipſum.* Nay, e fault ſeems to be doubled in him, becauſe he makes it ſſible for his ſeveral ideas, here mentioned, which ſeem to ſport but *natural underſtanding*, to conceive of Chriſt in his rſonality and Godhead *without any imaginary idea*: Whereas made the ſame poſſible only to faith, which imports *ſpiritual derſtanding*, or the mind enlightened and ſpiritualized, and at without the help of any ſpecies preſented from the imſination, as Mr. Robe here words it. Nay, but he adds, The imaginary idea helps in going as far as it can go; and ſich if it did not go, I could not think upon the Mediator God-man, becauſe I could not think upon him as man" ere again Mr Robe takes back his word, and either forgets contradicts what he juſt now ſaid, namely, that "the unrſtanding proceeds to think of him as God man *without the p of any imaginary idea*" Yet here he ſays, without it he uld not think upon him as man." But, if, when the unrſtanding comes, it can conceive juſtly enough of Chriſt as d man in one perſon, which is a *whole Chriſt*, why muſt he diſcredit his underſtanding, as if it could not manage that ner without the help of that ignorant act, which is ſtitute of underſtanding, and can help no farther than to eſent the picture of a man in the head, under the name of riſt; which yet, though it were as real as it is imaginary, ould not make a *half Chriſt?* Why, it requires an intellective underſtanding faculty, to conceive or think of the beſt half any man whatſoever; that is, to think of him as he is a itional creature: But the imaginative faculty by itſelf can ink of nothing properly but the body, the corps or outward gure of a man. And to apply this to the notion or view of hriſt as man, as if there were no other way of conceiving him o be man, but this ignorant way, that imports no underſtandg at all, makes ſuch groſs ſtuff as I know not what name o give it. And, if ever ſuch a maſs of abſurdities and inconſiencies was written by any that pretended to learning and vinity, I am not yet informed, nor if any good and ſpiritual an could publiſh ſuch carnal doctrine. But I will meddle with no man's ſtate, to judge it. God may leave his own ery far.

Mr. Robe ſpeaks here alſo of the neceſſity of *different ideas diſtinct in their natures, as the two natures of the glorious M r.* And "I muſt (ſays he) by one idea think of him as man, by another *as God, and by* a third as God and man perſonally *nited.*" *This I touched* formerly; and ſhall now only ſa

rice, that indeed he ſpeaks, as if he were well ſtored with ideas, that can ſerve him for contemplating any object, from the loweſt corporeal object to the higheſt ſpiritual myſtery of the goſpel; but never ſpeaks a word of the neceſſity of ſaving illumination, and of ſupernatural faculties for apprehending ſupernatural things. But the imaginary idea, ſays he, muſt be in order to the taking him up as God-man, becauſe without it he could not think upon him as man. Indeed there could be no fear of the want of an imaginary idea of that ſort; for that, being natural, ſtill attends faith, as a near neighbour, though neither as an aſſiſtant, nor an ingredient in faith; but rather as a let and impediment to right believing, and to a ſpiritual way of thinking of his manhood; which is not a thinking of him as man; in which reſpect he is not God; but as God-man in one perſon, in which reſpect he is thought upon truly and believingly as both God and man, and in a more noble way than by any imaginary idea of him as man; which is not at all a believing the truth of his manhood by faith, but a ſeeing the image of it by imagination. Which fancy and faith, though they be as *inſeparable*, yet are they as *incompatible*, as fleſh and ſpirit, while we are here in time. It would be a ſtrange argument, if one ſhould ſay, ſpirit and fleſh being ſo inſeparable in this world, the ſpirit cannot act without the fleſh, whether viewed in a natural or moral ſenſe, nor can the ſoul act without the body; therefore the body and fleſh is abſolutely neceſſary to the acting of the ſoul and ſpirit. Here is the *ſine qua non*. Well, it is equally true in this ſenſe, that the ſoul cannot breathe after God and ſpiritual things, without bodily breath. But yet what man would wiſh to be the publiſher of a doctrine importing ſuch a heterogeneous compoſition as this, that, in order to ſpiritual breathing after God and Chriſt, it is abſolutely neceſſary that one have bodily breath? I doubt not but any perſon, come to the exerciſe of reaſon, may ſee the abſurdity of ſuch a doctrine.

"Though (ſays he, *ibid.*) a perſon, by his imaginary idea, thinks only upon the manhood of Chriſt, yet he does not think upon a falſe Chriſt; ſeeing he does not think him man only, and no more." He means, no doubt, as he ſaid before, that this image is *always accompanied with a ſpirit of diſcretion, whereby he ſeparates the true from the falſe Chriſt; ſo that there is no danger of idolatry*. or that the act of the underſtanding, whereby *the* idea of the Mediator is rendered complex, "ſo quick (as *he here ſays*) that it needs not many moments to force it." *But, however* quick he ſuppoſes the underſtanding to be, I am *miſtaken if* he and I both do not find the imaginary idea and

ancy as quick and nimble, yea and much more ready to form nages of Chriſt as man, than the underſtanding is to conceive of him as God, or God man in one perſon. And no wonder, ſince the former is natural and the latter requires upernatural aid, as well as all the intellectual powers and faculties of the ſoul.

However, Mr. Robe adds, that, "from all this that he hath ſaid, the reader will ſee the poorneſs of Mr. Erſkine's ſophiſtical quibbling." But, paſſing this, as unworthy of my regard, I muſt notice his following words, wherein he thinks o make all that he hath ſaid ſo plain by this following ſimile, hat any man may underſtand how the imaginary idea of hriſt as man, though it extends no farther than to his manood, yet is helpful to the conceiving of, and believing in hriſt as God man in one perſon, or to the apprehending of whole Chriſt. His words are, p. 55. "The following ſimile will illuſtrate this a little. Man conſiſts of ſoul and body. he ſoul, being a ſpiritual ſubſtance, is not conceived by any maginary idea; but the underſtanding muſt conceive of it by ſimple and pure act of its own: But the ſame underſtanding onceives of the body, when out of ſight, by an imaginary idea, which cannot extend unto the ſoul; and yet that imaginary dea, though it can extend no farther than the body, is not nly helpful, but neceſſary to think upon any particular man; ecauſe we can have no idea of a whole man without it." This ſimile looks very feaſible, as if it would illuſtrate Mr. Robe's poſition to a demonſtration. But, alas! it halts, becauſe lame.: *And the legs of the lame are not equal: So is a parable in the mouth of fools*, Prov. xxvi 7. This parable or ſimile may hold with reſpect to all human creatures, in whom their entire human nature, ſoul and body, is unite in one human perſon, and where the ſeveral parts are ſo naturally connected with the whole, that the imaginary idea of a human body carries along with it the intellectual idea of a living ſoul animating that body, and conſtituting a human perſon; for here one thing includes another. But this ſimile will by no means hold with reſpect to Chriſt, in whom a finite human nature and an infinite divine perſon are unite in one perſonality: That is, the ſimile cannot quadrate with one whoſe human nature is no human perſon; and, conſequently, whoſe human nature, being unite perſonally to the divine nature of the perſon of the Son of God, in which reſpect only it is the object of faith, can be the object of no mere natural idea whatſoever, *far leſs an imaginary* one. So that this ſimile will no *more agree with the faith* of Chriſt as God and man in o

perſon, than an imaginary idea of a man can agree with the great myſtery of the child born, and the Son given to us whoſe name is called *Wonderful, The Mighty God.* In vain are any natural ſimilies adduced to illuſtrate or make plain, to human underſtanding, ſuch inconceivable and ſupernatural myſteries as ſurmount all finite underſtanding. In a word, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, does, in its nature, not at all include, but exclude the thoughts of his being God, as long as it is a truth, that as man he is not God. But the faith of his being God-man, includes the believing view both of his human and divine nature. Though the man that hath the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, ſhould think alſo that he is God; yet the one thought, while it laſts, is properly inconſiſtent with the other, becauſe the one no way includes the other: As, in the forementioned ſimile, the notion of a human nature, ſoul and body, includes the notion of a human perſon; but ſo it is not here; where, though the faith of the divine perſon includes both the natures that ſubſiſt therein; yet the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, or in his human nature, does no way include the Godhead nor the divine perſon of Chriſt. But, becauſe there ſeems to be falſe philoſophy, as well as falſe divinity, couched under Mr. Robe's ſimile here, I ſhall alſo conſider it a little further in a philoſophical way.

He there makes the idea of a whole man to be an act of the underſtanding; but aſſerts, that we cannot have this idea of a whole man, without the imaginary idea of a body: Which ſeems again to acknowledge, that this laſt idea is not an act of the underſtanding; though yet he ſays the underſtanding conceives of a body, when out of ſight, by an imaginary idea, which yet can extend no farther than the body, but notwithſtanding is neceſſary and helpful to think upon any particular man, becauſe we can have no idea of the whole man without it.

Where he ſeems miſerably to confound the beaſt with the man; I mean, the ſenſitive with the rational part of man.

1. He ſays, the ſoul, being a ſpiritual ſubſtance, is not conceived by an imaginary idea; but the underſtanding muſt conceive of it by a ſimple and pure act of its own. Where, firſt, he owns, that the imaginary idea is ſome other thing than the underſtanding, but that the underſtanding muſt conceive of the ſoul. But then he adds, that the ſame underſtanding conceives of the body by an imaginary idea. Here he makes the body, as well as the ſoul, the object of the underſtanding: *whereas corporeal* objects, as ſuch, are only the objects of *ſenſitive* and imaginative ideas, but not the objects of intellec-

tual and rational apprehenſion. Material things are the objects of ſenſe and imagination, and ſo of ſenſitive and imaginative knowledge, which all men have in common with brutes; hence are ſaid to know things naturally, as brute beaſts, Jude verſe 10. But, though theſe material and corporeal things may be the ſubject concerning which, or the occaſion from which the underſtanding may act; yet they cannot be the object of the rational apprehenſion, but under ſome rational, or ſpiritual and intellectual conſideration. Thus the body can only be conceived by ſenſe or imagination If I ſee it *preſent*, then it is by *ſenſe*; if it be *abſent*, or if I but ſhut my eyes and think of it, then it is by *imagination*; and there is no other way by which a body as ſuch can be conceived. And this is properly a ſimple idea of ſenſation

But, when we conceive of a man conſiſting of ſoul and body it requires a rational apprehenſion, and a complex notion; wherein we have nothing of the brutiſh ſenſitive idea of a body properly; for unde that conſideration it is not the object of rational knowledge. But we conſider it as a body animated with a living ſoul, and ſo apprehend a living man; and under that conſideration it is the object of the intellect; not as it is a body, for ſo, I ſay, it is the object of ſenſation and imagination, but as it is a body thus animated.

To ſay, one cannot have the idea of a whole man, without the imaginary idea of a body, is a ſophiſtical confounding the object of ſenſe and imagination with the object of reaſon and underſtanding: For, though it be true; yet the body, being the object of ſenſe, is not, as ſuch the object of the underſtanding; for, when a body is the object of underſtanding it is not viewed corporeally, as the object of ſenſe, but under ſome formally diſtinct, intelligible conſideration, namely, as a body animated, and ſubſiſting in union with a living ſoul; as a body ſo joined with a ſoul, as to conſtitute a human perſon. The idea of a body, as ſuch, belongs to the ſenſitive part of a man; but the view of the body, thus qualified, and cloathed with a living rational ſoul, cannot under this conſideration, be the object of ſenſe, or ſenſitive imagination, but only of intellectual and rational conſideration.

Thus the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, is a mentally ſenſitive notion (ſo to ſpeak) of his human body, or a picture and image of it in the brain, a mere object of inward ſenſe and imagination, not at all the object of faith. Nay, nor is the whole human nature of Chriſt the proper object of faith, but as it *ſubſiſts in the* divine perſon of the Son of God, and *only under this conſideration*. But to make it, as it is our

poreal an! as it is the object of an imaginary idea, to be the object of faith, is groſs and abominable idolatry.

2. That the underſtanding conceives of the body by an imaginary idea, this cannot be ſaid, unleſs it conceive of the body rationally, or under ſome intelligible or rational conſideration, no more than the underſtanding can be ſaid to ſee with the eye, or hear with the bodily ear: Which it does not, unleſs it ſee and hear rationally; for, when a man ſees nothing but material objects, and hears nothing but outward ſounds, it is not the underſtanding that ſees or hears, even though it be the man that hath underſtanding or the rational man that ſees and hears; yet it is only in a ſenſitive way he does ſo, unleſs he ſee and hear rationally. When a man ſees a book, ſo may a beaſt that wants reaſon, and ſo may a babe that wants the exerciſe of reaſon. Thus it is not the underſtanding that ſees, unleſs a man ſees it, ſo as to apprehend the ſenſe, meaning, wiſdom, or learning that is in the book: Then, and not till then, does the underſtanding ſee it; for then he ſees not merely with the ſenſitive, but with the rational eye: And the imaginary idea of a book, which belongs to the ſenſitive faculty, can give no help to the underſtanding, or intellectual ſight which belongs to the rational ſoul. The intellectual does not thus ſee with bodily eyes.

Again, in hearing with the ears, though a man were attentive to liſten; yet, while he hears nothing but a ſound of words or voices, his underſtanding does not hear, any more than a brute (ſtartling at a noiſe) does, unleſs he hears rationally, ſo as to underſtand the words and ſenſe of what he hears. And, as a man may think and ſpeak rationally of the ſubject matter of a book, even without the imaginary idea of a book, and may think rationally of what he hears with the ear without the imaginary idea of the voice or ſound that came into his ear; ſo it is poſſible to think rationally of a man, who conſiſts of ſoul and body, without the imaginary idea or ſenſitive view of a body. But, ſays Mr Robe, can he conceive of the whole man without the imaginary idea of a body? Yea, when he conceives rationally of a man, his conception is not ſenſitive, reſpecting the body; but intellectual, reſpecting the man or the perſon: And the more that ſenſe intrudes itſelf into the company of the intellect, by forming conceptions of the body, and preſenting images of the outward form and figure of that, the more is it a hinderance, inſtead of a help, to the rational conception of the perſon, or *the intellectual* apprehenſion of the gifts, parts, and other *real properties of the man*, as ſuch.

What *ſenſe divides*, looking only to the body, *reaſon unites*, and looks to the man, the perſon. Reaſon therefore includes the conſideration of the whole man, ſoul and body jointly, as one perſon, one human nature; ſenſe takes not in the whole, but a part, the body. To ſay then, we cannot conceive of a whole man without the imaginary idea of a body, is to ſay, that reaſon cannot conſider what God hath joined in one perſon, without ſenſe interpoſing, to make diviſion and confuſion, by ſetting up the image of a body inſtead of a man.

But ſuppoſe, that, while matter and ſpirit are ſo connected as we ſhould ſcarce be able to have the rational conception of a man, without the ſenſitive image of a body; yet to what purpoſe is this confuſion introduced into divinity, blending ſenſe and reaſon and faith together? Alas! what ſort of a religion is that like to prove, wherein imaginary ideas lead the van? They ſeem to have little of the exerciſe of reaſon, who cannot diſtinguiſh it from ſenſe; and far leſs of the exerciſe of faith, who confound it with ſenſe and fancy.

Mr. Robe ſays, p. 55. "We cannot think upon Chriſt really as he is God-man, without this imaginary idea of him as man, ſeeing it makes a part of the idea or conception of him as God-man; and, if that were wanting that moment, we would only think of him as God, and not as man alſo." Where his ſpeaking of a part of the idea of him as God man, ſmells rank of what I had obſerved, a parting and dividing the object of faith, and of making parts where there is no partition. The object of ſaving faith is not a twofold object, but only one, namely, God in Chriſt; that is, one God in and through one Mediator, who is God man. The manhood of Chriſt is not one object of faith, and his Godhead another, and his perſonality a third. Nay, it is different ideas indeed that makes the diviſion, and conſequently the deſtruction of the object of faith. But the doctrine of faith aſſerts, and the grace of faith maintains the unity of the object of faith reſpecting the perſon of Chriſt. Why, but, if this imaginary idea be wanting that moment, we would only think of him as God, and not as man alſo, ſays Mr. Robe. But this I deny: For the true faith of his perſon God-man excludes only the corporeal image, or the ideal and imaginary thought of him as man; but it includes the real ſpiritually rational, true and believing thought of him as both God and man in one perſon. Beſides, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is ſtill a low, unworthy, earthly way of thinking of him, by means only of natural ſenſation; *which is neceſſarily* a miſhapen thought of him: But *to think of him believingly*, is a high and heavenly way, by *the means of ſpiritual* illumination and divine teaching.

Mr. Robe says again here, p. 55. "That the imaginary idea of Christ as man is necessary to faith, so far as it is necessary that we have some conception of what we believe. And, if Mr. Erskine set up for a faith of what we can have no conception of, it is the same, and no better than the blind and implicit faith of the Papists." *Answer.* This, according to the *Scots* byword, is *ill fitting*; for it is truly verified in Mr. Robe's doctrine of imaginary ideas, particularly of Christ as man: For what knowledge and conception of what we believe is given by forming the image or figure of a man in the brain? No more knowledge than what the most brutish creature of the human kind naturally hath. I set up indeed for a faith of what is above Mr. Robe's conception and mine both; but a faith founded upon the word and truth of God; the divine revelation of this glorious mystery, *An incarnate God.* And I think it were better, with Papists, to believe as the church believes, and at the church's direction, than to have a faith guided by an imaginary idea; which Mr. Robe makes to lead the van in believing. Whereas the knowledge of Christ that I maintain to be necessary to, and imported in faith, is the knowledge of him as revealed in the word of God. Our imagination can form no true image of Christ in the mind; but God gives us the true image of Christ in the word. How fitly the blind implicit faith of the Papists is brought in* here, let the world judge. Their doctrine of human traditions, and decrees of councils and Popes, as pretended to be of equal authority with the scriptures, is to deny the word of God to be the only rule of faith, and judge of controversies. My doctrine is the direct opposite of this. But woes me! that ever such doctrine was published by a minister of the church of Scotland, that a dead idol, or image of a human creature formed in the mind by imagination, must necessarily be set up for an object of faith and worship. This is the same, and no better than the idolatrous faith and worship of the Pagans. It is strange to make an imaginary idea of Christ as man necessary to faith, and to give this for a reason

* *Duvenantii determinationes quæst. p.* 133. Credere nemo intelligitur, nisi quando fides ejus propria ad creditum aliquod enunciabile terminatur, ut recte docuit Thomas. *Ibid.* De fide implicita, non salutifera; nam fides quæ valet ad salutem, semper apprehendit verbum evangelii, quod est potentia Dei ad salutem. Implicita a Papistis vocatur, (1.) quia in cognitione Prælatorum involvitur, populo interim dogmata illa, quæ ea credi dicuntur, omnino nesciente. (2.) Quæ etsi habeat particularem apprehensionem dogmata creditorum, habet tamen eorundem certitudinem nixam, non verbi aut Spiritus testimonia, sed auctoritate & testimonio Prælatorum ita docentium & decernentium. Prior fides implicita fuit in cognitione: hæc implicita est in *auctoritate* hominum aliorum, &c.

of it, becauſe we cannot believe what we have no conception of. If the meaning were, that we cannot believe without conceiving *that Chriſt is man* as well as God, this is a truth. But as an imaginary idea *that Chriſt is man*, is direct nonſenſe, becauſe a man can no more ſee a truth by an imaginary idea of things corporeal, than he can feel a ſhadow with his fingers; ſo an imaginary idea of Chriſt *as man*, is no conception at all, either of his perſon, or of any truth to be believed anent him, but juſt of a human body preſented to the fancy. And to ſay, that we cannot believe without this notion of a body, or conception of a corporeal object, is, I think, one of the moſt wild and carnal propoſitions that ever any man advanced; for we ought at leaſt to believe rationally. Though faith is a *ſupernatural* act, and that both becauſe the *power* and *ability* for it is ſupernaturally given, and the *evidence* whereon it reſts is ſupernatural; yet it is a *rational* act, no enthuſiaſtic notion, whereof no reaſon can be given, but merely a ſtrong perſuaſion of one's perceiving, ſeeing, or feeling ſomething. And, though a believing perſuaſion, whereof he that hath it ſometimes cannot, through weakneſs give a rational account, may be *ſolid*: yet a perſuaſion whereof no reaſon can be given, is certainly not *faith*, but *fancy*. Much more is that faith but a fancy that is founded upon a conception or imaginary idea of Chriſt as man; which imports not ſo much as a rational conſideration of him, but a notional view of his manhood in the brain. Which is a thing as eaſy and natural to all mankind, as it is for one to ſhut his eyes, and retain the notion of a man in his head. No wonder then, that the man who publiſhes this thinks he hath a right conception of what he believes, and will not ſet up for a *faith of what he can have no conception of*. Many myſteries of the goſpel, particularly concerning the wonderful perſon of Chriſt, God in our nature, are ſo deep, and profound, that the framing diſtinct conceptions of them is beyond all human reach, and tranſcends not only ſenſe, but reaſon: Not that goſpel truths do contradict ſound reaſon, but they may tranſcend it. What is contradictory to reaſon, muſt be rejected; for God lays no man under an obligation to believe what cannot poſſibly be true: But though what is contrary to reaſon, cannot be received as an article of faith; yet what tranſcends our capacity and conception, may be great truths of God, which we are called to believe, and which reaſon itſelf ſays we ought to believe; not becauſe it appears rational to us, but upon the divine authority of the revelation, *ſubmitting* our reaſon to that, and believing it *the moſt rational thing* in the world, that we ſhould believe *what God affirms*, and do what he commands.—"For indeed

(says Dr. John Collings, the continuator of Poole*, on
x. 5.) to give assent to a proposition merely upon a ſu
rational demonstration is no faith; that is, no divi
Truly to believe, in a divine ſenſe, is to aſſent to a pro
upon the credit of the revelation, though we cannot
out by our reaſon. And this is to have our thoughts
into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt, &c." Go
teries are to be received then upon the teſtimony o
his word; ſuch as this doctrine of an incarnate God,
Word was made fleſh. And indeed, if Mr. Robe here
own experience, that he never believed what he had
ception of, he hath upon the matter, declared, that to
he never believed the great myſtery of godlineſs, *God
ed in the fleſh*; which is a myſtery beyond our concep
what cannot be ſeen but by that faith which is *the
things not ſeen*. Mr. Troſſell on Matth. xiii. 11,
"We do not ſo much believe them (viz. the myſterio
of the goſpel) by our underſtanding, as we underſta
by our believing." And the learned Arrowſmith,
Cambridge, in his treatiſe, intitled, ΘΕΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ
made man, on John 1 p. 44 hath theſe words: "T
two ſorts of things. Some things there are which w
underſtand, and then believe; others which we firſt
and then come to underſtand. If ye go to natura
firſt ye underſtand them, apprehend the inſide and
them, and then believe them, becauſe ye underſtan
But now, in theſe great ſupernatural myſteries, that ye
derſtand them, you muſt firſt believe them. For this
two rules. 1. If ye will firſt ſet reaſon on work, b
more than we can find out in theſe myſteries, that w
faith; but if after ye have believed them, ye will ſ
a work, that *may help faith*, &c." My opponent is
contrary mind; yea, of a mind I doubt if ever any w
himſelf. Dr. Arrowſmith ſays, immediately before the
above cited, "Scripture will help you more than reaſ
but Mr. Robe cannot believe without the help of an
any idea or conception; and this conception he muſt
fore he believe. This is true, ſays Arrowſmith, if
ſpoken of underſtanding in natural things. Now, w

* Dr. Calamy, in his *Account of the miniſters, &c. ejected by
Uniformity*, vol. II. p. 13. 4to. ſays, that Dr. John Collings, a ve
and laborious miniſter in Norwich, in the county of Norfolk, is
of the annotations on Jeremiah and the Lamentations, the Ep
liſts, the two epiſtles to the Corinthians, that to the Galatian
Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, and the book of the Revelat
Supplement to Poole's.

be ſpeaks of the natural faith of natural things, he muſt in-
ed be doing with his natural ideas of natural and corporeal
ngs. But to make any ſuch natural thing as ſuch, the pro-
r object of ſaving faith, is what none will do that are not
der the power of great ignorance.

Mr. Robe next ſays, p. 55 "How an imaginary idea of the
diator's human nature according to the diſcovery of it is
word, for this muſt alway be, is unbelief, which Mr Erſkine
th aſſerted again and again, I muſt leave to him to explain
en he gets leiſure; for, at preſent, I cannot make ſenſe of it."
re I muſt deſire Mr. Robe to explain at his leiſure what he
ans by an imaginary idea of Chriſt's human nature *according
the diſcovery of it in the word*; for this, he ſays, muſt always be
t, according to the word of God, it muſt never be; for the
rd of God diſcharges all vain imaginations of whatever ſorts.
d indeed, if an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, be unbelief,
I did aſſert, then it can never be according to the word.
ough the word make a diſcovery of Chriſt's human nature;
it patronizes no imaginary idea of it. But ſince it puzzles
. Robe to think how his darling imaginary idea of Chriſt
man can be called unbelief, I ſhall here take leiſure to ex-
ain how it is ſo.

An imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is at beſt but an imag'n-
y ideal knowledge of Chriſt. But this imaginary and ideal
owledge is both ignorance and unbelief. *Therefore* an im-
inary idea of Chriſt as man, (when ſuppoſed to belong to
ith,) is ignorance and unbelief. The firſt of theſe propo-
ions I ſuppoſe cannot be denied; for it aſcribes as much to
at idea as poſſibly can be aſcribed to it, namely, ſome kind
knowledge, though I own it is no more, as I ſhew elſe-
here, than what men may *be ſaid to know naturally as brute
aſts*. Therefore, as to the ſecond, that this imaginary and
eal knowledge of Chriſt as man is ignorance and unbelief.
prove both from the ſcripture and from the ſchools. (1.)
rom the ſcripture. One of the ſcriptural accounts of unbe-
ef is, that it lies in a ſinful *inability*, as well as unwillingneſs
come to him, and *receive him as offered*, or to *receive the things
f the Spirit of God*, John vi 44. Rom. viii 7. 8. 1 Cor. ii. 14.
ow, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, or the imagina-
ion relating to that corporeal object, though by this imagin-
tion were meant, juſt what Mr. Robe calls it elſewhere,
*Letter ſecond, p. 6. namely, that power and faculty in man which
recalls the ideas of ſenſible objects after they are gone, and preſents
hem from time to time to the underſtanding, as fit matter of thought*;
er, *this imagination* is under even a phyſical or natural in-
bility as well as a ſinful and moral incapacity, to conceive

that manhood of Chriſt, as it is the object of faith; which, a ſuch, is no ſenſible object. It is not within the limits of tha faculty to preſent to the underſtanding any thing like th proper object of faith; it is naturally incapable of conceivin an object of faith, and capable only of apprehending object of ſenſe and ſight, which, as ſuch, are in ſcripture ſet in direct oppoſition to objects of faith. Therefore the imagin ary idea of Chriſt as man, when ſaid to belong to faith, o when it intrudes itſelf into faith's company, is not faith ac cording to ſcripture, but unbelief. He that cannot believe i in ſcripture an unbeliever; and, if inability to believe be un belief, then to ſuppoſe either the act or object of faith to b imported in an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, while it i both naturally and morally impoſſible for that faculty to ap prehend that object, as it is the object of faith, is to call tha faith which the ſcripture calls unbelief.

Hence, 2 Cor iv. 4. it is ſaid, *The God of this world hat blinded the minds of them that believe not, leſt the light of the glori ous goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them* Here it is plain that the true knowledge of Chriſt is a know ing him as he is the image of God, ſeen in the light of th glorious goſpel; and that, where this light doth not ſhin into the mind, it is a blinded, ignorant, unbelieving mind Now, the object of imaginary and ideal knowledge Mr. Rob ſpeaks of, is not Chriſt as the image of God, but only the imag of a man; and that not ſeen in the light of the glorious goſpel nor with the eye of faith or enlightened underſtanding but wit the eye of natural fancy and imagination. Therefore that im aginary or ideal knowledge of Chriſt as man, is ignorance an unbelief, and the very oppoſite of faith, having no agree ment with it, either in its act, object, ſubject of inheſion, o medium. Of which elſewhere. (z) From the ſchools the ſam thing is eaſily proven. Philoſophers there ſay, *Ens & veru convertuntur*; that is, the *being* of a thing and the *truth* of i are ſuch convertible terms, that where there is not *truth* ther is *nothing*. If a thing be not truly what it is, it is not know at all. Hence an ideal and imaginary knowledge of Chriſt i ignorance and unbelief; and that becauſe it is no real or tru knowledge of him as he is the object of faith. This philoſo phy is not alien from ſcripture: For the Spirit of God ſay where there is *but a name to live* there is *death*, Rev. iii 1. H that is not a true chriſtian, is no chriſtian at all. Thus th Spirit of God ſays alſo of thoſe that *conſent not to wholeſom words, they are proud knowing nothing*, 1 Tim. vi 3, 4. Wher *there is no true knowledge of Chriſt, there is no knowled*

him at all. An imaginary knowledge of Chriſt is a mere ſh..d-, a non-entity; it hath an appearance of ſomething, but it nes of nothing, goes to nothing, and is nothing, becauſe it is truth, therefore it belongs not to knowledge, but ignorance, : to faith, but to unbelief and fancy. In a word, an *evil heart unbelief* lies *in departing from the living God*, Heb. iii. 12. nce the argument is evident, Unbelief lies in a departing fr m 'living God, to a ſeeking of the living amo g the dead. But imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, is a departing from the livi g d, or from God in Chriſt revealed in the word, to a dead id l, image of a man in the brain, inſtead of the living Immanu l, d-man. Therefore an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is un- ief, in departing from the living God, to a dead image. That belief lies in a departing from the living God, none will deny. at an imaginary idea can have the living God for its object, . Robe denies; for it hath no object but what is corporeal. erefore the concluſion is evident and undeniable, That an im- nary idea of Chriſt as man is unbelief*.

SECT. X.

n the next paragraph, p. 55, 56. Mr. Robe hath theſe words: What Mr. Erſkine adds in this page, is amazing. He applies ſe words of our Saviour, *The fleſh that profiteth nothing*, to riſt as man, or his human nature; which is not only a pervert- the meaning of that ſcripture, but a blaſphemous application it." *Anſwer.* It may be truly amazing to ſee how Mr. Robe uld publiſh ſuch a palpable falſhood, that I apply theſe words Chriſt, *The fleſh that profiteth nothing*, to *Chriſt as man*, or to human nature, as if it were *unprofitable*; whereas any that ds my diſcourſe, will ſee I apply them to Mr. Robe's *imaginary a of Chriſt as man*, or in his human nature. Which imaginary a thereof I proved there, as I do here, *to be unprofitable*. So t I am far from perverting the meaning of that ſcripture, and r more from the blaſphemous application of it, as Mr. Robe is eaſed to call it, unleſs he can prove, that his imaginary idea of riſt as man, is ſuch a profitable thing, that it is blaſphemy to y, *that it profits nothing*. But this indeed I ſay, and prove too, this book, as well as before. That ſuch an imaginary idea of at *fleſh*, is ſo vain and unprofitable, that to aſſert the neceſſity it, borders upon blaſphemy, and upon a flat contradiction of the ue meaning of Chriſt's words, *The fleſh profiteth nothing*.

T

* Whereas, as Charnock ſays, vol. ii. p. 554. Spiritual apprehenſions are a antidote againſt unbelief.—None can live to Chriſt as dying and ſing for them, *who have no other knowledge of him but after the fleſh*, *Cor. v. 15, 16. Carnal conceptions* of the depths of God do leave a *ry gloomy darkneſs upon the ſoul.*

Mr. Robe (p. 56.) pretends to give the plain and only meaning of these words, John vi. 63. namely, "To eat Christ's flesh only as the Capernaumites [as he expresses it] understood him, can profit nothing, either to the comfort of the soul, or the resurrection of the body. How blasphemous is it to speak of our Lord's humanity, as that which profiteth nothing? Though it would not profit us to eat his flesh with our teeth, yet is it not infinitely profitable to us otherwise?" And then he proceeds to show, from our Larger Catechism, *how necessary it was that our Mediator should be man. Answer.* If my comment upon the text ought to have been thus treated, let any consider who reads it over; for my words are as follows: *Is it saving faith to see or know Christ after the flesh, either by the eye as a present man, or in the imagination as an absent man? Does not Christ forbid such carnal notions of eating his flesh?* John vi. *Such fancies and gross imaginations made his hearers there to stumble at the true Christ; therefore he says unto them,* verse 63. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, &c. Again, *That imaginary idea that cannot think of him justly, but only of the flesh that profiteth nothing, must be a very ill neighbour, yea, a neck-break to faith; which will have nothing to do with a half Christ, but conceives of, receives and matches with the whole person of our Immanuel.* Now, suppose my words here had not touched the proper intent and meaning of the place, nor been agreeable to the analogy of that text and context*; yet, if they be any way agreeable to the analogy of faith, with what impudence could Mr. Robe assert it was a blasphemous application of it? Does he not seem fond to find out blasphemy in the most precious gospel truth, through his ignorant fondness to maintain his imaginary notions? I own I did not consult any commentator upon that text, when I wrote the foresaid note; but I thought that what I said, was obvious to any that had common sense. But now Mr. Robe hath obliged me to look to the mind of commentators; and I find so many of them to be of my mind, that it is high arrogance for him to say, that his gloss is the *plain* and *only* meaning, namely, *That to eat Christ's flesh with the teeth is what profiteth nothing; and that this was the only sense wherein the Capernaumites understood it.* If Mr. Robe had but consulted Dr. John Collings, the continuator of Pool, upon that text and context, he would have seen, that he judged it hard to think, that the Jews who carped at Christ's doctrine here, of *eating his flesh*, were so brutish as to put this gloss of Mr. Robe's upon them: For thus he speaks upon verse 52. *How can this man give us his flesh to eat? They still will (or wilfully) under-*

* *Mucovii regula theol. & philos.* p. 17. Interpretatio alia est analoga *contextui*, alia analoga fidei.—Patres sæpe non conveniunt in explicatione *loci hujus vel illius*, & afferunt illi quidem interpretationes fidei analogas, *sed non semper analogas contextui.*

nd ſpiritual things in a corporeal ſenſe: Yet it is hard to conceive w they could imagine that Chriſt ſpoke of giving them his fleſh to t as men eat the fleſh of oxen and ſheep. But, which way ſoever ey did underſtand it, indeed their captious temper inclined em to conceal any other ſenſe they had of it, and to repreſent iat our Saviour ſaid as exceeding abſurd. And upon the text elf, verſe 63. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the fleſh profiteth thing*, he hath theſe words: *The fleſh of Chriſt eaten carnally* nd I add, imagined or conceived of carnally] *can be of no profit r the nouriſhment of the ſoul; nor can the fleſh of Chriſt, conſidd alone, or by any virtue in it, profit. It only profiteth by virtue the divine nature, which, being perſonally unite to the human nare, adds all the virtue and merit to the ſufferings and acts of the man nature, ſo as the human nature hath all its quickening and rtue from the divine nature.* The words that I ſpeak unto you, ey are ſpirit, and they are life: That is, (ſays he,) *They are iritual, and ſuch as by the belief of which you may obtain ſpiital and eternal life: For, by believing theſe words, and obeying em, you ſhall come to believe in me; which is that eating my fleſh d drinking my blood which I intended; not any corporeal or carl eating: This is a very groſs conception of yours; neither can y ſuch thing as that do you good.* Now, let any conſider, if this t any ways different from my doctrine upon that text. The ws there had groſs and carnal conceptions of Chriſt's fleſh or manity, through unbelief, ſeparating it from his Deity; which d them to groſs notions alſo of eating his fleſh. But, if no ſuch ing can do any good, or be of any profit, then the imaginary lea of Chriſt as man, or in his humanity, which imagination in ſelf neceſſarily includes nothing of the Deity, muſt be a very *rnal and unprofitable thing.* So *Sharpii ſymphonia Prophetarum Apoſtolorum*, p. 552: (I omit the Latin for brevity's ſake) [illegible] ks o this purpoſe, in reconciling verſe 54 and 63. "Fleſh conſidred *abſolutely* as the fleſh only of a man profiteth nothing; but iewed *relatively*, as the fleſh of the Son of God, it hath a quickning virtue, &c. The fleſh of Chriſt gives life to the world, no therwiſe except as it is ſpiritually conſidered and perceived: For e who conſiders nothing in the fleſh of Chriſt but what is terreſrial or earthly, will find nothing but death in it; but they who erceive the virtue of the Spirit in that fleſh by faith, will find t to be quickening and life giving fleſh, &c. But it *profiteth nothing*, if it be conſidered naturally, in its own original; becauſe as it was the ſeed of Abraham, it was by nature obnoxious to death; and therefore could not give life, &c." To this purpoſe Wilſon in his *Chriſtian Dictionary* hath theſe words following, explaining *the fleſh of Chriſt*: "That is, either, (1.) Whole Chriſt, both *Godhead and manhood* in one perſon, with all his benefits. *John vi. 55. My fleſh is meat indeed*; that is, myſelf being be

lieved on, a synecdoche; (that is, an usual figure of a part f whole). (2.) The manhood of Christ, as it is considered from his Godhead, or divine nature, John vi. 63. *The fle fiteth nothing*; that is to say, the human nature of Christ profitable to us of itself, but as the Godhead dwells in it, life to it, and quickening us by it. Thus [says he] Mr. T and the Bible notes expound this place. Augustine and Chry expound it of understanding the word carnally, and not s ally. The former is the better, [says he;] which sense also tine allows, &c." Theodore Beza's note upon this pl "The flesh of Christ does therefore quicken us, because t that is man is God. Which mystery is only comprehen faith, which is the gift of God, proper only to the elect. that is, that power which flows from the Godhead, causes t of Christ, which otherwise were nothing but flesh, both to itself, and to give life to us." (Where, by the by, to live self, must be understood of living in its divine person, namel person of the Son of God; because Christ's humanity ha other.) Thus Calvin, cited by Marlorat, on this text *Whence hath the flesh any quickening virtue, but because it i itual?* And he speaks to the same purpose as above. An also Musculus on the close of the verse, *The words that I are spirit and life: His words received by faith are profitabl without faith they profit nothing. So the flesh gives life t except it be perceived spiritually.*

We can have no communion with Christ in his flesh and by any imaginary idea thereof; which is but corporeal. one of the authors in the *Morning Exercises*, vol. v. says, ' communion with Christ, and participation with him, is sp and mystical, by faith, not carnal and fleshly. To imagi other participation of Christ in this life but by faith, is to throw the gospel." And, after citing this text, It is *the that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing*, adds, "To look t other communication of Christ, or of his flesh and blood, bu *is spiritual, is to contradict him in the interpretation* he give *own words.*" Now, who to this day ever charged all or these famed authors with perverting the meaning of that ture, or the blasphemous interpretation of it? Yet the given just the same meaning of it that I gave, only in d words. Matthæus Flacius Illyricus, one of the famed R ers, speaking of *the flesh that profiteth nothing*, cites Cyrill Augustine explaining it of the flesh of Christ its being eate carnally, and not by faith; and Chrysostom explaining it *carnality, not perceiving divine things. Clavis scripturæ*, c To the same purpose, also the learned Ravenell, in his *Th scripturæ*, p. 397. explains this text, *The flesh profiteth n* "*of the human nature of Christ alone, and separately con*

from the divinity;" and says, "Chryſoſtom expounds it of carnal hearing, when theſe things are taken carnally which are ſpoken and ought to be underſtood myſtically and ſpiritually." Thus, though I ſtand condemned by Mr. Robe, yet it is with very good company, whom he will never outſhine.

The forecited *Symph. Prop. & Apoſt.* p. 354. ſays, "The knowledge of Chriſt is twofold. (1.) There is a carnal and hiſtorical knowledge; whereby not only the rulers of the Jews and others knew Chriſt, John vii. 26. but alſo the devils, Mat. viii. Mark i. Luke iii. and elſewhere: *Which knowledge profiteth nothing to ſalvation.* The *ſecond* is ſpiritual; which is of faith, and juſtifies believers: To which knowledge the Jews that crucified Chriſt were ſtrangers, 1 Cor. ii. 8. John i. 11. And upon this ignorance Peter excuſes the Jews and their rulers, Acts iii. 17. becauſe, judging of Chriſt according to the fleſh, they knew nothing ſpiritual in him." So indeed it fares with the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man. There is nothing ſpiritual therein; and ſo it can lead to no point of ſpiritual knowledge: Therefore it deſerves to be called, according to Chryſoſtom's gloſs, *The fleſh that profiteth nothing.* But moſt interpreters underſtand this of the very fleſh and human nature of Chriſt as above. Theodore Beza's Latin comment upon the New Teſtament deſerves here to be cited upon this text, "*The fleſh that profiteth nothing*: That is, [ſays he,] ſo far as concerns any quickening virtue; which is [not of the humanity, but] only and wholly of the Deity: Not that it is unprofitable; far from it, for it interveens as an abſolute acceſſory organ, and as the only channel out of which the Deity, which moſt fully quickened that humanity perſonally unite to it, does derive that life of his unto us alſo, who are unite to him by faith; inſomuch that without that fleſh (thus conſidered) there is no ſalvation, both in ſo far as it was offered for us, and alſo in as far as it is eaten or applied by faith." But it reads far better in the Latin; therefore ſee it at the foot of the page*.

Hutchinſon on that text ſays, "This may be underſtood as a clearing of what he ſaid concerning the eating of his fleſh, that it was not a carnal fleſhly eating of him that could profit any thing: but it is a ſpiritual eating of him by faith, that brings the quickening and life of which he ſpoke. But it ſeems rather to clear what he had ſaid concerning the quickening power of his

* *Nihil prodeſt*, οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ. Nempe quod ad ipſam vivificationis energiam attinet; quæ tota eſt unicæ Deitatis: non autem quod ſit inutiles; quod abſit: intervenit enim ut abſolute neceſſarium organum, & ut canalis unicus, ex quo Deitas, quæ aſſumptam illam humanitatem hypoſtatice unitam pleniſſime vivificavit, in nos quoque ipſa per fidem inſitos *illam ſuam vitam* derivet. Adeo ut extra illam carnem non ſit *ullus primum quatenus pro nobis oblata, deinde quatenus comeſa, ſive per fidem applicata.*

fleſh, or human nature. And by fleſh and ſpirit we are to underſtand his divine and human nature, as Rom. i. 3, 4. 1 Pet. iii. 18. and ſo the meaning is, that however much had been ſpoken of life to be given by partaking of his fleſh, yet this is not to be underſtood of his fleſh conſidered in itſelf, and without his Godhead, *as they conceived him to be a mere man*, but all the quickening virtue that is aſcribed to his fleſh or human nature, does flow from his Godhead to which it is united." Mr. Obadiah Sedgwick on the Covenant, p. 69. ſays, "The preſence of Chriſt (I mean [ſays he] his bodily preſence only) was not comfortable without the Spirit: It is the *Spirit that quickeneth, the fleſh profiteth nothing*; ſo Chriſt ſpeaks, John vi. 63." Mr. Robe muſt find all theſe divines chargeable with a blaſphemous interpretation of that ſcripture, ere he can fix his charge againſt me. But I pray he may be forgiven, becauſe he did it ignorantly, I hope not maliciouſly.

It is evident from all theſe authors, their mind and mine harmoniſe ſo much upon this text, that they ſay, upon the matter, that, ſince Chriſt as man is not God, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is the moſt unprofitable thing in the world; and that, in this view, *the fleſh profiteth nothing*, becauſe the fleſh or humanity is only the organ or *inſtrument*, but the perſon Chriſt, the God-man, is the agent, in redeeming work. And the imaginary idea of fleſh (the object of which idea is only corporeal, as Mr. Robe himſelf aſſerts) neceſſarily ſeparates the inſtrument from the agent; and thus makes the inſtrument unprofitable. So that his imaginary idea, and not my doctrine, is chargeable with the blaſphemy he ſpeaks of, namely, *That the human nature of Chriſt is unprofitable*. The faith of Chriſt's perſon as God-man which I teach, makes the human nature of Chriſt unſpeakably profitable, as it is the great inſtrument of our reconciliation with God, and eternal ſalvation, becauſe of its perſonal union with the divine nature; whereas the imaginary idea of it renders it profitable for nothing.

But I might here add, that, whereas Mr. Robe ſays, "That the plain and only meaning of this text here, is, to eat Chriſt's fleſh only as the Capernaumites underſtand him, namely, with their teeth; and in that ſenſe it is unprofitable:" It is certain, they might have ſome other view of eating his fleſh, even though their view at beſt was carnal. This ſeems plain from the words which they ſay about it, verſe 34. *Lord, evermore give us this bread.* Some, particularly Aretius thinks, they ſpeak this *ironically*: But the foreſaid Dr. Collings ſays, *that moſt interpreters agree, that they ſpeak this ſeriouſly*; that is, that they were willing *enough* to have ſuch bread, (if any ſuch were to be had.) But *yet, they not* conceiving aright the nature and excellency of the *bread our Saviour* mentioned, it is poſſible, the imaginary idea

hey had of bread, ſuch as that he fed them with when he multiplied the loaves, and for which they followed him, verſe 26. might one of the reaſons why they could not conceive or receive right this bread of God, which he had been here preaching of to them, verſe 27. ſaying, *Labour not for the meat which periſheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlaſting life; the bread of God that comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world*, verſe 33. But it is certain, that, when here they ſay, *Lord, evermore give us this bread*, they could as yet have no notion like that of the Canibals, of eating his fleſh with their teeth, for Chriſt had not yet ſpoken to them of eating his *fleſh*. However ſince interpreters differ on this head, it is very preſumptuous for Mr. Robe to pretend to aſſign the only ſenſe and meaning, and make himſelf judge of the controverſy; and ſuch a judge, as to determine, upon the matter, that there can be no carnal way of uſing the fleſh of Chriſt there imported, except that of eating it with the teeth; and as if a carnal way of conceiving of it, were no carnal way of uſing it: Which yet ſeems moſt agreeable to the text and context: For

It is poſſible, and probable alſo, that when Chriſt came to explain this bread of God, and ſhew it to be his fleſh, then the ſenſitive idea of his fleſh, or of Chriſt as a preſent man, which they had before their eyes, was the great reaſon why they could not conceive aright of this object of faith. As their idea of bread was carnal, while that was ſpoken of, ſo as they could not ſee God therein, nor conſequently could believe; ſo their idea of fleſh, when that was ſpoken of, or his human nature which they ſaw with their eyes, was carnal; ſo as they could not ſee God in in him, nor conſequently believe that he was the Son of God, and the bread of God. Therefore Chriſt tells them, that the fleſh as thus viewed by them, *profiteth nothing*, becauſe they did not ſee the Spirit; that is, (as Beza and others explain it,) his eternal Godhead, wherein that fleſh, or human nature now ſubſiſted. And indeed this is all the help that an imaginary idea of *Chriſt as an* abſent man can give to faith. It effectually mars the profitable view of *Chriſt as God*, or in his perſon God-man. The fleſh of Chriſt then, as it is the object of an imaginary idea, is of no profit for any of theſe ends and purpoſes which Mr. Robe himſelf mentions; becauſe it is not any idea of fleſh, or of man, but the perſon God-man, that is profitable food for faith.

Yet ſo bold is this dreadful accuſer, his following words are remarkable in the ſame page, "What evil hath not contradicting this bleſſed work led, and is like to lead our brethren into! What befel chriſtianity at the beginning from its adverſaries, hath befallen this *reviving of it. Contradicting* is attended with blaſpheming, *Acts xiii. 45.*" *Anſwer.* (1.) On whoſe ſide the charge of blaſphe*my lands in the point before us*, let the world judge from what has

been ſaid. (2) If the bleſſed work Mr. Robe ſpeaks of, had t
foundation than the imaginary doctrine he publiſhes in th
the brethren had all the reaſon in the world to oppoſe the
to ſuch an imaginary work, and all the promoters there
hath ſaid, Iſa. v. 20, 21, 24. *Wo unto them that call evil good,*
evil; that put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs,
are wiſe in their own eyes, and prudent in their ſight. T
as the fire devoured the ſtubble, and the flame conſumeth t
ſo their root ſhall be as rottenneſs, and their bloſſom ſhall go u
To ſpeak of the glorious Light of heaven, the Sun of Ri
neſs his ariſing, which was chriſtianity at the beginni
compare it with what Mr. Robe calls the reviving of i
time, in a work wherein ſo many imaginary ſhadows hav
ed the minds of a multitude, is ſuch a proud boaſting wa
ting darkneſs for light, that it is no wonder God be bringi
the loftineſs of ſuch boaſters, and writing confuſion upon
they have been promoting, and making that bloſſom to f
duſt. Charnock ſays well, vol. ii. p. 434. "*Faith i*
dence of things not ſeen, Heb. xi. 1.—It is ſuch an ev
brings ſubſtance along with it, *the ſubſtance of thing*
for; it evidences God and Chriſt, and the things of
Chriſt to be ſubſtantial ſolid things, not doubtful opin
imaginary notions. P. 218. In this there is a manifeſt d
between the working of Satan, and the operation of G
ſets his batteries againſt the affections, becauſe the entry
eaſieſt. God breaks in upon the underſtanding, which
chief fort, will quickly be a means to reduce the leſſer ci
When the work begins in removing the blindneſs, it is
to a true converſion. When it begins only in the affecti
a prognoſtic of a quick ſtarting aſide."

Mr. Robe next (p. 56. and 57.) endeavours to illuſt
neceſſity of conceiving of Chriſt as man; and from m
ſpoke of the myſtery of faith, that to conceive of Chriſt
is no myſtery at all, he inſtances a branch of the m
faith, namely, "To believe *that one of the ſoldiers wit*
pierced his ſide, and forthwith came there out blood and wate
[ſays he] to conceive of this is indeed no myſtery at all."
again I muſt notice, he ignorantly confounds faith an
for he confounds believing by faith, with conceiving by
aginary idea. The former is ſtill a myſtery, even in
ſtance; but the latter is none. Does Mr. Robe think th
myſtery in believing that Chriſt's ſide was pierced? Ind
is the object of ſenſe or fancy, or an imaginary idea, it is
tery: No man needs have it inculcate upon him to conc
thus; for it is natural to all mankind, whenever they
ſide pierced with a ſpear, preſently to know what it m
have the idea of it. But, as it is the object of faith, it

terious, that no imaginary idea can reach up to it, any more than it can reach up to the height of the Old Teſtament prophecy, that Chriſt ſhould be pierced, and thence, comparing it with the New Teſtament accompliſhment, fall in with the deſign of that promiſe, Zech. xii. 10. *They ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and ſhall mourn.* Again, is there no myſtery in believing, that *forthwith came there out blood and water*, as Mr. Robe thinks? Indeed there is no myſtery either in ſeeing this with the eye, or fancying it with the imagination. Theſe are merely natural acts. But, as it is the object of faith, ſince the Spirit of God hath told us of ſuch ſpiritual myſteries included in this *water and blood*, 1 John v. 6. which I cannot take time to enlarge upon, it is a wonder to me, to hear a miniſter ſpeaking ſo much in the clouds of darkneſs, as to ſuppoſe there is nothing of the myſtery of faith here! Nay, I muſt tell Mr. Robe, that whatever truth he can ſpeak of in the Bible, if it relate to any corporeal thing, and ſo can be both the object of ſenſe and the object of faith, as it is the object of ſenſe and of an imaginary idea, it is no myſtery, no part of the object of faith; and as it is the object of faith, it cannot be the object of ſenſe or fancy: For truth hath no bodily ſhape for ſenſe or fancy to work upon.

This anſwers the following queſtion of Mr. Robe, "Is the conceiving of Chriſt as man, neceſſary to faith, as it is a part of the object of faith?" For to conceive of him as man by an imaginary idea, is to conceive of no part of the object of faith; becauſe that id a can conſider his human nature no otherwiſe than in itſelf, nor of him otherwiſe than as a mere man. Beſides, the perſon of Chriſt as the object of faith is not diviſible into parts, as if the human nature were one part of it, and the divine nature another. What groſs divinity this is, I have ſhewed elſewhere. In this it may be ſaid, as in another caſe, *Is Chriſt divided?* No.

Mr. Robe here ſpeaks of another poſition of mine, namely, "To conceive of Chriſt as man, and yet at the ſame time to conceive of him, and to receive him as God-man, are flat contradictions." To which he anſwers, "To conceive of him as mere man, excluding all other conceptions of him, and to conceive of him and receive him at the ſame time as God-man, would be a flat contradiction. But who ſaith this? No man ever did, that I know of. But to conceive of him as man, and yet at the ſame time to conceive of him and receive him as God-man, is no contradiction; becauſe the conceiving of him as man, is a part of the conception of him as God-man, and without which we cannot receive him as God-man, unleſs we receive what we have, and ſhould have no conception of." Now, here is ſtrange philoſophy, and as ſtrange divinity. (1.) That to conceive of Chriſt as man, is a *part of the conception of him* as God-man. Surely no philoſopher *will allow this nonſenſe.* To conceive of Chriſt as man, is by a

imaginary idea; which, according to Mr. Robe, hath no other object but corporeal. To conceive of Chriſt as God-man, is only by faith. Hence to ſay, the one is a part of the other, is as good ſenſe, as to ſay, that ſenſe is a part of faith; or that man who is the object of fancy, is a part of God, who is the object of faith. Nay, but perhaps Mr. Robe thinks that man is a part of the God-man. Why then, (1.) What ſtrange divinity is this, to ſuppoſe, that man is a part of the perſon God-man, when it is ſure the perſon of Chriſt hath no parts? But then how ſhall Mr. Robe's reaſon be anſwered, which he gives for the conceiving of Chriſt as man, its being a part of the conception of him as God-man, namely, *That, without this conception of him as man, we cannot conceive of him as God man; becauſe we cannot receive him as God-man without it, unleſs we receive what we have, and ſhould have no conception of.* To this I anſwered before; and therefore only ſay, That, if the proper object of faith be what we can have a natural conception of, as we have of a man, then the proper object of faith would not be God or God-man in one perſon; for of this object we can have no conception but by faith. But Mr. Robe may ſuppoſe, that the human nature is inconceivable; and therefore there muſt at leaſt be an imaginary idea for the conceivable part of Chriſt. But this will not do; for the human nature of Chriſt is no part of his perſon, becauſe his perſon is one, and not diviſible into parts*: And therefore his human nature as well as his divine muſt be conſidered and conceived, as ſubſiſting no other way but in the divine perſon of the Son of God; and hence his humanity as thus ſubſiſting, is as far from being conceivable by ſenſe and imagination as his Deity: And conſequently an imaginary idea of it is nothing but a vain imagination. It is true, the human nature is conceivable, conſidered in itſelf; and Mr. Robe is obliged, in this ſame page, to own, that there is no myſtery in conceiving the human nature conſidered in itſelf: And hence he muſt own, that this human nature conſidered in itſelf, is no part of the object of faith, or of that inconceivably great myſtery of godlineſs, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*; and that, however the human nature of Chriſt in itſelf, as viſible and material, may be the object of ſenſe, ſight, viſion, or imagination, as I ſaid; yet it cannot, as ſuch, be the object of faith, but only as the inviſible God is ſeen therein and thereby: And conſequently, that faith is ſtill *the evidence of things* properly *not ſeen*, and only *a ſeeing of* him *that is inviſible*.

* *Macovii regulæ theol. & philoſ. p.* 111. Aliud eſt in Chriſto *perſona*, aliud adjunctum ἐνυπόστατον. Perſona eſt ſola divina natura; non enim ſentiendum eſt perſonam Chriſti quaſi conflari ex humana & divina natura, *ac quaſi ex partibus* conſtitui; ſed quod divina natura ſit ſola perſona, *quæ in ſuam perſonalitatem* aſſumpſit humanum naturam; humana vero *natura eſt adjunctum* ἐνυπόστατον.

I muſt own and acknowledge, that, while I write upon this ſpeculative ſubject, I am conſcious to myſelf of ſo many vain imaginations of my own, that I am obliged to write againſt myſelf as well as Mr. Robe, and my own imaginary ideas as well as his. But, for the ſake of truth, and for the honour of our Redeemer, I muſt bear witneſs againſt all ſinful thoughts of him as man, wherever they lodge: Therefore I muſt ſay, that to conceive of Chriſt as man in Mr. Robe's ſenſe, is a ſinful erroneous and blaſphemous conception. It is an act of the higheſt ingratitude to our Redeemer, to degrade him from his Deity, becauſe he hath aſſumed our humanity. To conceive of him as man, by forming an image of his manhood in our minds, is, in my opinion, as really ſinful and idolatrous, as to form an image of his Godhead in our mind; becauſe the man Chriſt is really God; but Chriſt as man is not: Therefore to conceive of him as man by an imaginary idea, is to conceive of him not as God. Chriſt the Son of God, by aſſuming our human nature, hath come ſo near unto us, as to render himſelf more conceiveable to our *faith*, than his abſolute Deity could be. He hath aſſumed our nature into ſuch a perſonal union with himſelf, as is not inconſiſtent with his being what he ever was, and is, and will be, *God over all bleſſed for ever*. And it is enough, and more than ever men or angels could have expected, that it can be ſaid, that *God is become man like one of us*, and *the man is God*; becauſe the manhood exiſts in the Godhead of the Son; and ſo is fitted to be the object of the *faith* of men, and only of their faith. But to debaſe therefore his perſon, in which his manhood exiſts, ſo as to conceive of him as man in Mr. Robe's way, and of his manhood as of other men, is a ſinful and a ſhameful degrading him from his Deity; becauſe he married our humanity, and betrothed it to himſelf for ever: Which was in effect a ſaying of us and our nature, *I will betroth them unto me for ever*; and which, inſtead of tempting us to dethrone him, ſhould teach us to exalt him, as the Father doth, with this proclamation, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, Heb. i. 8.

I had ſaid, that *faith will never be acted by believers to any advantage, till it get itſelf ſhaken looſe of that unprofitable mate, the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man.* To which Mr. Robe ſays, "Saving faith will never get itſelf rid of this abſolutely neceſſary prerequiſite, the conception of Chriſt as man." If this be true, then it may be made a matter of prayer to God that he would give it; and how would this prayer ſound in the ears of any that know the myſtery of the goſpel, *Lord, ſince it is not poſſible for me to believe, that thou art God-man without this abſolutely neceſſary prerequiſite, the conception of thee as man, therefore help me to conceive of thee as man, that this conception* may help me to *conceive of thee as God-man in one perſon!* If the queſtion be, what

conception of me as man do ye ſeek? The anſwer Mr. Rob
p. 31. is, "Even to think of thee as man, by the exerciſe
ſame faculties and powers wherewith I think and conc
other men." If any true believers ſhall ſay, this prayer is
ful; for I find too much of that already, I cannot get ri
imaginary idea of Chriſt as man: Nay, but ſays Mr. Robe
belongs to the knowledge of Chriſt as God-man, that you ha
ſame knowledge of him as man, that you have of othe
Could Mr. Robe in the face of him who ſays, *I am God, an
is none elſe*, venture to pray for that which is the vain ol
every man's imagination? Is this a part of knowledge
ſought of God?

Mr. Robe alſo (p. 57.) ſays, "That without the conc
of Chriſt as man, faith could not be the evidence of theſe
that are inviſible and not ſeen, becauſe of their abſence and d
from us." Here is a ſtrange view of faith, as *it is the evid
things not ſeen*. Mr. Robe may at leaſt own, that the hum
ture of Chriſt was never viſible till it was aſſumed: But fai
the evidence of things not ſeen, before ever the Son of G
incarnate; for that text, Heb. xi. 1. ſpeaks of the faith
Old Teſtament ſaints; but their imaginary idea of Chriſt a
could neither be of a man properly abſent, or preſent, but f
Abraham's faith *ſaw Chriſt afar off*, when yet his human
was neither viſible in earth, nor in heaven. But whatever
is viſible, abſence does not make it inviſible in itſelf; and w
preſent or abſent, paſt or future, if it be viſible, it is not pr
the object of faith, but fancy. Fancy may make it preſen
viſible, by a figure or image of it in the brain. And, if that
helps to make faith the evidence of things not ſeen, then it
faith by deſtroying the nature of faith; that is, by turning
from being a view of Chriſt in the word to be a viſion of
the head. Of this it ſeems Mr. Robe ſpeaks; for, in the ſe
ing words he ſeems to explain faith, and explain it away, b
king the beatific viſion in heaven to ly in a conception of
as man, when there will be no faith. His words are: "A
ception of Chriſt as man will remain when faith will be no
for *we ſhall ſee him as he is*." And in this he hath ſo far co
ed part of my words which he hath been fighting againſt;
ly, that that part of Chriſt, for I may ſpeak of a part o
when I ſpeak in Mr. Robe's language, of an imaginary idea
as man; I ſay then as before, *That that part of Chriſt which
ble, was the object of ſenſe on earth, is the object of viſion in h
and may be the object of any man's fancy and imagination; but
was, nor will be the object of faith, but as the inviſible God
therein and thereby*: So far, I ſay, he here ſpeaks for me, b
ing the conception of Chriſt as man will remain, when fait

be no more. But, as this conception and faith will be separate in heaven, so they are as far separate from one another on earth. For faith is no carnal nor natural conception of Christ as man, but a spiritual and believing view of him as God and man in one divine person. I am ashamed therefore to take even the help Mr. Robe gives me; because I do not allow the vision of Christ in heaven to be what he calls it, or makes essential to it: For I think it will not at all consist in a conception of Christ as man; for to conceive of him thus is nothing like *seeing him as he is*. As man he is not God: whereas *to see him as he is*, is to see him to be God, and God man in one person, not by faith, but by immediate vision. No such thing will be there as an imaginary idea of Christ as man. But, after the resurrection, when Christ shall have *changed our vile bodies, and made them like unto his own glorious body*, not only shall *every eye see Christ, when he comes in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*, but particularly the redeemed shall with the *eyes of their bodies* see the *glorious body* of the Redeemer; which will be sweet *sense* with a witness, not faith: But with the eyes of their souls and perfectly glorified understandings they will see him, and conceive of him, *not as man*, but as God and man in one person; *for they shall see him as he is*, or see him to be what he is, namely, the person God-man. And therefore in this person they will see God, and all the glory of God forever; for what they now see through the glass *of the word by faith*, they will then see immediately *face to face*.

Mr. Robe adds, "Let the reader observe Mr. Erskine's cunning in citing two scriptures, as if he was proving his proposition by them; to which they have not the least tendency. This is to deceive the simple." My proposition was, "That till faith get itself shaken loose of that unprofitable mate, *the imaginary idea of Christ as man*, it will never believe to any profit or advantage, nor believe either *to the saving of the soul*, Heb x. 39 or to *the giving glory to God*, Rom. iv. 20." The question then is, if these two scriptures have no manner of tendency to prove my position? Indeed I think they prove it beyond all contradiction; and I give my reasons, namely, because, as long as a believer hath no better company than this unprofitable mate, *the imaginary idea of Christ as man*, he will never see any salvation to the soul in him, more than in another man; nor see the glory of God in him, more than in another man, according as Mr Robe hath formerly explained himself: Yea not so much will he see in this unprofitable mate, as he may see *in a living* man upon earth; especially if he see *a good man or a saint*, whom God can make an instrument of

ſalvation to him, and in whom he may ſee ſomething
image of God: But in this dead idol and image of C
man formed in his brain by imagination, he can ſee
but what is unprofitable to man, and diſhonouring
as all vain imaginations are; and this in a ſpecial ma
cauſe it ſtands ſo directly oppoſite to the true Chriſt,
true object of faith as repreſented to us only in the
goſpel. The object of an imaginary idea includes
but what is corporeal, as Mr. Robe confeſſes; therefo
cludes nothing that properly relates, either to the ſ
of the ſoul, or to the glory of God; for none of th
corporeal, but ſpiritual things.

SECT. XI.

Page 57. at the foot, Mr. Robe ſays, "There follows
ful perverſion of two ſcriptures." Which ſcriptures I h
tioned in the following manner. "What can be thou
of this doctrine of imaginary ideas? I fear it belongs to
of philoſophy which the Spirit of God warns us againſt
8. *Beware leſt any man ſpoil you through philoſophy and ve
after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world
after Chriſt.* God ſays, *How long ſhall vain thoughts lod
you?* And ſuch is the abſtract notion and vain ima
of Chriſt's humanity, or of Chriſt as man." Now,
Robe, "The one [of theſe ſcriptures] ſpeaks againſt v
loſophy, the other againſt vain ſubterfuges. Theref
ſpeak againſt ſuch ideas as the underſtanding hath o
real abſent things, by the help of the imagination. H
men, in making a ſeceſſion from the church of Scotlan
alſo a ſeceſſion from common ſenſe?" To which I anſw
That this doctrine of imaginary ideas brought in by M
as belonging to the knowledge of this great myſtery
neſs, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*, belongs only to vain phi
I ſuppoſe I have made evident in this book; and conſ
that ſcripture is not perverted, but adduced to the pu
hand. (2.) If the other ſcripture relating to vain t
ſpeaks of vain ſubterfuges, then it is moſt ſuitably
in oppoſition to this doctrine of imaginary ideas of
man, which Mr. Robe and others advance, as a plain
and ſhift or ſubterfuge, for the defence of that imagi
deluſive work, wherein ſo many have been groſly
with the fancy of their ſeeing Chriſt as man, inſtead o
ing faith of the perſon God-man exhibite in the goſp
of all vain thoughts this ſeems to be the moſt dange

cauſe it is a corporeal repreſentation of an object that is moſt ſpiritual and ſublime. For to abſtract from the ſpiritual conſideration of Chriſt's humanity, as ſubſiſting in the perſon of the Son of God, and to make it the object of an idea, that can ſee it no otherwiſe but in a corporeal image, is a corrupting and defiling one of the moſt pure myſteries of faith, with our moſt vain and vile imaginations. And as we uſe to ſay, *Corruptio optimi peſſima, The abuſe of the beſt things is the worſt abuſe*, ſo *vain thoughts* about this ſubject are moſt vile thoughts, and moſt pernicious and deſtructive alſo, in ſo far as they are not lewailed, condemned, but entertained, vindicated and defended. (3.) It is ſcarce worth my while to anſwer Mr Robe's queſtion here, *Have theſe men, in making a ſeceſſion from the church of Scotland, made alſo a ſeceſſion from common ſenſe?* Only, as he miſrepreſents our ſeceſſion, which was never from the church of Scotland, but from the preſent judicatories, becauſe of their ſeceſſion from the true reformed covenanted mother-church of Scotland, to which our adherence in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government is manifeſted; ſo our brethren that formerly ſeemed as zealous as we, their ſeceſſion from the true mother-church, and remaining involved in the defections of the time, as this hath contributed little to their credit; ſo their falling in with the deluſions of the time hath added as little to their *common ſenſe*.

In the following paragraph, p. 58. Mr. Robe ſays, "There is nothing but what I have touched, and I think ſhewn the weakneſs and ſophiſtry of, except that he [Mr Erſkine] ſaith, *That Chriſt, in forbidding Mary to touch him when he appeared to her after his reſurrection, forbids us to have any idea or conception of him as man, which he ſaith is a mere mental handling of his body.* To propoſe this, is to expoſe it, and anſwer enough; for it is juſt as pertinent, as it would have been to have ſaid, Chriſt forbids us to think of him as man, becauſe he aſked, Luke viii. 45. *Who touched me?*" *Anſwer.* Mr. Robe needs not boaſt of his common ſenſe, when he hath expoſed it ſo much here, as I ſhall ſhew in the following particulars.

1. His comparing Chriſt's words to *Mary, Touch me not*, with his words relating to the woman with the bloody iſſue, that touched the hem of his garment, and was healed, when inquiring about her, and ſaying, *Who touched me?* and his ſpeaking of theſe as if they were any way ſimilar, is moſt unworthy of, and unbecoming a miniſter of the goſpel: For the former was *a carnal touch* of ſenſe, that Chriſt *forbad*; the latter was *a ſpiritual touch of faith*, that he inquires about, in order to commend it. So *that the one text is juſt* as diſtant in the meaning from the othe *as fancy and faith* are: Which here are ſo miſerably confou

ded, as that to relate this anſwer of Mr. Robe's is enough indeed to refute it But,

That it is a carnal touching Chriſt's body that Chriſt here forbids to Mary, and, therein, alſo all carnal imagination about his human body, is not my mind only, but of the greateſt divines I know. *Symph. Froph. & Apoſt.* ſays upon this text, *Tangi a Maria Chriſtus noluit, quia nihil niſi carnale reſpiciebat:* Chriſt would not be touched by Mary, becauſe ſhe was minding only carnal things. Dr. Owen on the Spirit, p. 10. hath theſe words: "They would have been again embracing his human nature, and rejoicing in it. But, as Chriſt ſaid to *Mary, Touch me not,* John xx. 17. TO WEAN HER "FROM ANY CARNAL CONSIDERATION OF HIM; ſo he inſtructs "them all now to look after, and truſt unto the promiſe of "the Holy Ghoſt. Hence is that of the apoſtle, *Though we* "*have known Chriſt after the fleſh, yet now henceforth know we* "*him no more,* 2 Cor. v. 16." Till I occaſionally looked to this paſſage, I did not know that Dr. Owen had expreſſed himſelf almoſt in my very words, as well as in my meaning upon this text.

The abſence or preſence of Chriſt's human nature makes no alteration in the leaſt upon the proper act or object of faith, unleſs it be ſuppoſed, that the abſence thereof contributes rather to the help of faith; becauſe then faith has not the diſadvantage of a ſenſible object interveening between it and the proper, inviſible, complete, and ſpiritual object of it, namely, Chriſt as God-man, in one inviſible perſonality. On which account the learned Beza, whom afterwards I ſhall cite, ſaid the ſame of Chriſt's external and carnal preſence that I ſay of internal and carnal ideas and conceptions of it, *viz.* that *plurimum officeret,* it was a very great hindrance and obſtacle to faith*.

If his removing from his diſciples as to his bodily preſence had been a diſadvantage to faith, then it would never have been *expedient for them, that he ſhould go away:* But he has told us the expediency thereof, becauſe of the Spirit of faith, his coming to fill up that room to advantage. The abſence of Chriſt as to his human nature is no hinderance, but rather a furtherance to faith; becauſe the perſon of Chriſt, the God-man, is as much preſent to faith, as if his human body were on earth, in our ſight and in our arms; in which caſe, we might be ready to miſtake, and think we ſaw and embraced the perſon, while, inſtead thereof, we would only ſee and

* *Pet. Martyr. loc com* p. 155. Si carnis Chriſti aſpectus præſentiæ *ejus, quoad carnem,* impedit, quo minus Spiritus ejus accipiatur; quanto *magis de imaginibus* ejus affirmandum erit!

ing the human body of Chriſt by ſenſe. They that believed in Chriſt when they ſaw him bodily preſent on earth, his human body was as diſtant from their faith, as now when we believe in an exalted Chriſt. And they that now believe in an exalted Chriſt, have his human nature as near to their faith as they who ſaw him in the fleſh; yea, as near as the beloved diſciple, that leaned on his boſom. The reaſon is, becauſe the object of faith is the perſon God man, who is equally preſent every where (but the human body of Chriſt, which (as I ſaid in my quarrelled Appendix) was the object of ſight on earth, and will be the object of viſion in heaven, never was nor will be the object of faith, but as the inviſible God is ſeen therein and thereby. A whole Chriſt is nearer to our faith in the word, that if the human body were in our arms, as it was once in old Simeon's: And therefore we are directed neither to *aſcend* or look up to *heaven*, and form in our mind the image of a man there, by an imaginary idea; nor to *deſcend to the deep*, to fancy or ſuppoſe him as a man upon earth; but to look toward the true Chriſt as repreſented *in the word of faith*, whereby he is nearer to our faith, than he can be any other way, *even in our mouth and in our heart*, Rom x. 8.

The multitude preſſed upon Chriſt when the woman with the bloody iſſue touched the hem of his garment, and was made whole. I would aſk Mr. Robe a queſtion here, when the multitude preſſed upon his body, did they touch his perſon? Or, when they touched his body, did they touch the object of faith? What they ſaw and touched was the object of ſenſe; but, as it was outwardly viſible and tangible, was it the object of faith, or helpful to it? If that were ſo, then, according to this carnal doctrine, they got a better touch of him than the woman with the blood. iſſue; for ſhe did not touch his body at all, but only the hem of his garment. though yet Chriſt ſays, *Who touched me?* and alſo, *Some body hath touched me*. Nay, but her touch of faith was another thing, as one of the fathers ſaid on this head, *Turba premit, fides tangit: The multitude preſſed, but faith touched.* If Chriſt were bodily on earth, and a man ſhould get his body in his arms, as the wanted Simeon's faith, he would be as far from the object of faith, as he is juſt now, when his body is in heaven; and conſequently as far from it, as the man that has but an imaginary idea in his head of Chriſt's exalted body now in heaven: For to have that body as ſuch, whether really preſent to *ſenſe*, or imaginatively preſent to fancy, is equally *diſtant from the proper* object of *faith*.

Aretius, in his Latin comment upon John, ſpeaks likewiſe to the following purpoſe upon this text, *Touch me not:* "There "is a twofold touching of Chriſt. The firſt is a bodily touch "ing of him, ſuch as Thomas got, and others, Matth xviii "9 John xx. 27, 28. This touch was here denied to Mary "becauſe ſhe was too much ſet upon it. Neither by itſelf "or of itſelf, can it profit the toucher; for ſo the ſoldiers "and Judas, and crucifiers of Chriſt, touched him unprofit "ably. *2dly*, There is a ſpiritual touching of him, when "by faith we are joined to him, obey him, imitate him, and "take care to be really, as well as nominally chriſtians. "Thoſe who thus touch him, do touch him rightly and pro "fitably. This is the touch of all the faithful ſince Chriſt's "aſcenſion; and the ſame was common to ſaints before his "aſcenſion; and Chriſt calls Mary off from the corporeal to "the ſpiritual touching of him." Beza, upon the text, *Touch me not, for I am not yet aſcended*, ſays, "What then, might any touch him after he had aſcended? Yea ſurely; but in a ſpiritual way, and with minds carried upward by faith: Which is the only ſaving way of apprehending his fleſh, and of which that *external and carnal preſence of his was a great hindrance.*——From theſe words of Chriſt men may be taught, that the carnal way of eating Chriſt, which they defend with ſo much obſtinacy, is not only imaginary, but alſo diametrically oppoſite to the word and inſtitution of God."

Henry, on the word of Chriſt to Mary, *Touch me not*, ſays, "He forbids her to dote upon his bodily preſence, to ſet her heart upon that, to expect the continuance of that; and leads her to that ſpiritual converſe and communion which ſhe ſhould have with him after he was aſcended to his Father. ——Mary thought now her Maſter was to ſet up a temporal kingdom, ſuch as they had long promiſed to themſelves. No, ſays Chriſt, touch me not *with any ſuch thoughts.*"——It ſeems Henry and theſe other writers, judged as much as I, that Chriſt here forbids all carnal handling of Chriſt, whether bodily or mental.

Hutchinſon, on that word, *Touch me not*, ſays, "It ſeems to impart a reproof of her carnal diſpoſition, who doted on his bodily preſence, and delighted to be touching him,—— that he would not be enjoyed in a carnal, corporeal manner; but ſhe is to expect and wait till his aſcenſion, and then ſhe and the reſt might try it with, and touch him, not bodily, but ſpiritually by faith. ——Chriſt being now exalted, it requires *much ſpiritual converſe* with him, and that we do not expect *a carnal* or bodily preſence; it being the uſeful fruit of

carnal diſpoſitions, that becauſe men do not aſcend up to Chriſt by faith, therefore they fancy a carnal and bodily preſence of Chriſt on earth with them, &c."

What then can make my explaining that text, *Touch me not*, as prohibiting a mental handling of Chriſt's body, as well as corporeal embracements of it, and an inwardly carnal mind, as well as outwardly carnal manners, relating to his human body; what I ſay, can make this explication ſo uneaſy to Mr. Robe? Why? He is conſcious that it condemns evidently his imaginary idea of Chriſt as man; which he ſays, "If it be according to the word, as is always underſtood, will neither lead us to a falſe Chriſt, nor a falſe faith." What he means by ſuppoſing it may be according to the word, I cannot underſtand. The word tells us this truth, That Chriſt is man as well as God; and faith can feed upon it as it is a truth in the word, and ſo a ſpiritual, not a corporeal object. But will the word of God warrant any perſon to alter the image of this truth in the word, and turn it to the image of a man in the brain? If not, then an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, cannot poſſibly be according to the word, but directly oppoſite to it: And therefore ſuch an imaginary idea leads to nothing elſe but a falſe Chriſt and a falſe faith.

Nay, but ſaith Mr. Robe, "This imaginary idea is ſo neceſſary, that faith, in receiving the Mediator, can no more be acted without it, than without knowledge" Anſwer. We uſe to ſay, *Compariſons are odious*. Such indeed is the comparing of that carnal idea with ſpiritual knowledge. I have elſewhere ſhewed, that an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man is no part of chriſtian knowledge; nay rather, when compared to it, it is a part of our natural darkneſs and groſs ignorance. For illuſtrating this farther, that place of ſcripture may be conſidered, Mark viii 18, 19, 20, 21. Chriſt ſays to his diſciples, *Having eyes, ſee ye not?* ——— *When I brake the five loaves among five thouſand, how many fragments took ye up? They ſay unto him, Twelve. When ſeven among four thouſand, how many baſkets full of fragments took ye up? They ſay unto him, Seven.* They did not want an imaginary idea of loaves, and baſkets, and fragments; but yet they wanted knowledge and underſtanding relating to the miracle: Therefore Chriſt ſays to them, verſe 21. *How is it that ye do not underſtand?* As if he had ſaid, That imaginary idea and remembrance ye have of loaves and baſkets, imports no more knowledge or underſtanding than a young child may have that has not come to the uſe of reaſon or intellectual knowledge Spiritual underſtanding and faith are not converſant about theſe objects *of ſenſe and imagination*, which are merely material and cor-

poreal. How is it that ye do not understand the invisit power that effectuated these miracles, and the invisible abi ty I have to make provision for you, though *ye have no brea* verse 16, 17. now along with you? Thus it is evident, t loaves and baskets of which they had an imaginary ide were no part of the proper objects of faith or spiritual u derstanding in this miraculous discovery Christ made of hi self, otherwise he would not have challenged them for ha ing no understanding; that is, no view of the invisible Go or of the glory of his power and mercy in this miracule work. And thus it is with all other material or corpore objects as such, that may be, or are the objects of eve man's imaginary idea; they are no part of the object faith or spiritual knowledge, but in so far as the invisit God, or invisible and spiritual things, are seen in and t them. The imaginary notion or fancy relating to the gre outward materials, is in itself no part or branch even rational knowledge. While we are in this world, we c perform no spiritual act, without having our bodies and n tural senses attending: And hence I might argue, Mr Ro and I cannot preach a sermon without our bodies; therefore body is an absolutely necessary prerequisite unto right preac ing because we can no more preach without the body, th without the Bible.——Who would not smile at such learne argumentation? Yet such is that of Mr. Robe's here, wh he saith, *That saving faith in Christ can no more be acted with an imaginary idea of him as man, than without knowledge:* Fo an imaginary idea relates at the best only to the knowledg of natural bodies; but that spiritual knowledge, witho whi h faith cannot be acted, relates to the knowledge o spiritual beings, spiritual truths, spiritual mysteries; of whic no image or figure can be formed in the mind b, imaginatio without contracting the guilt of spiritual idolatry, by carna thoughts of Christ, or seeking to know him after the flesh And therefore what Mr. Robe calls a very profane praye was a very necessary and scriptural prayer, viz *That the Lo would in mercy deliver us from it; for our senses and imaginatio can give us little help.* This last clause "appears false [says Mr Robe] from what hath already been said, and will farther b

* *Symphonia Prophet & Apost* p. 448. In 2 Cor v. 16 Nunc no amplius Christum cognoscimus secundum carnem —Non de Christo ipso ut homine, licet perfectissimo, cogitemus, qualis, scilicet, tunc erat, cu in terris versaretur; sed eum nunc ut penitus cœlestem & gloriosum cog *scieramus, ac proinde jam pulsis vita cœleste quam terrestri vivamus qui enim Christo inhæret, factus est novus homo, & cœlestis non terrestris indolitatur.* P 319. Deum [Christum] se non v cognoscendum.

followeth." The thing then which he thinks he hath
, and is to prove falſe, is, *That our ſenſes and imagination*
e us little help, namely, in drawing us out of this mire of
itual idolatry. I am ſo much afraid that ſenſe and im-
ion holds us in it, inſtead of drawing us out of it, that
d incline to another form of prayer upon this head,
Mr. Robe ſhould alſo call it a profane one, viz. *That*
d would deliver us from all the help that our ſenſes and imag-
can give us.

Robe proceeds (p. 58, 59, 60, 61.) to prove what help
uſes and imagination give toward the knowledge of
nd to refute Mr. Fiſher and me, as he thinks, for aſſert-
e contrary. I fear I would tire my reader's patience
eat all that Mr. Robe ſays there. Only he cannot ac-
e of wronging his words, ſince I refer to the pages I
write at as great length on this as the reſt; but, for
y's ſake, I confine myſelf to a few remarks on this head.
hitherto he hath been confounding faith with fancy; ſo
his ſubject here, he ſeems to confound ſenſe with rea-
the ſenſitive with the rational part of man. 'Tis evi-
n the forecited pages how Mr. Robe, for his own de-
varies the phraſe of his ſpeech He had ſaid, "Our
and imagination are greatly *helpful* to bring us to the
edge of the divine nature and perfections, as he is wiſe,
ful, &c." And how doth he explain this? Why, ſays
Is it not by the *intervention* of our ſenſes and imagina-
that we know theſe viſible things, and perfections
d, that are the objects of faith, and not of ſenſe?"
ence he argues, "How can this agree with Mr. Fiſh-
ſertion, *That our ſenſes and imagination cannot aſſiſt us at*
thinking upon the divine nature and perfections? And how
r. Erſkine's aſſertion, *That the light of nature and works of*
, teach us, that God is, and that he muſt be worſhipped with theſe
ions; how can this agree with, or rather muſt it not be
contradiction to what the apoſtle ſays, 2 Cor ii. 11,
. *The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God?*
Thus he retorts my words upon me, and bids me an-
myſelf, ſuppoſing I am engaged in the ſame contradic-
wherein I ſuppoſed him to be involved, when he ſaid,
Mr. Fiſher's aſſertion was in flat contradiction to what
poſtle Paul ſays, Rom. i. 20. Now, I think 'tis evident
that Mr Robe hath by no means cleared himſelf For,
ough it be by the intervention of our ſenſes and imagin-
that we know *theſe viſible* things; yet doth it hence
, *that our ſenſes* and imaginations are great helps and

assistants to us in the knowledge of the invisible thin
God, or his divine nature and perfections? Here then
cribes the knowledge of what is knowable of God by th
of nature, unto sense and imagination, or to mere l
powers and faculties, instead of ascribing it unto natura
son and reflection, or intellectual powers; without whic
and imagination of themselves can no more help men
knowledge of the invisible God, than they can help the
beasts that want reason, and yet have bodily senses and
inations. Sense and imagination may sometimes give
sion to a man that hath reason, and the exercise of it, to
his rational powers upon spiritual and invisible things
they can give no help or assistance thereto, no more than
or feet can help a man to speak, or eyes and ears help
think, reason, and argue, when he wants the exercise of
ment. The outward senses and imaginations are indeed
ly helpful to the knowledge of visible and corporeal th
These only are within that sphere. But to make them
ly helpful to the knowledge of God, his nature and p
tions, and of spiritual and invisible things, is to exalt
to the throne of reason, to invert the order of nature
make the body animate the soul in effect, or the bodi
helpful to see what only the rational soul or intellectu
can help us to see; such as *the invisible things of God, his power and Godhead*, Rom i 20. In the glass of the visib
ation, here our senses and imagination help to nothing,
the viewing of corporeal objects, or what is visible; w
no help at all to see what is invisible, or to know the
nature and perfections The intellectual faculty can
help to this by reflection and natural deductions. Like
help that the imaginative faculty could give here, u
were to form in the mind some visible image or cor
figure of these incorporeal and invisible things; wh
dreadful help, leading to idolatry. The reason is, the
can rise no higher than the fountain. Sense can rise no l
than to things within its own sphere If the mind ha
image formed in it by the help and assistance of sense a
agination, it must be only some visible or corporeal i
which are the direct opposite of invisible and spiritual:
Therefore sense and imagination cannot assist us in the
ledge of the invisible God, and his perfections. Sense
us only to see visible things. To carry its help farther
make it the instrument of idolatry, by turning invisible
into visible, and spiritual things into corporeal, or spir
body, by giving them bodily figures in the mind.

The light of natural reaſon is only the inſtrument whereby man may ſee God in the creature, Rom. i. 20. Therefore I ſaid before, *That the heavens declare the glory of God, The light of nature, and the works of creation, teach the* quod ſit, *or that God is, that he is clothed with ſuch perfections as theſe works declare; not the* quid ſit, *or what he is.* This I aſſign to a faculty that is in a higher ſphere than reaſon itſelf, namely, divinely ſupernatural faith in and upon a divine ſupernatural revelation, according to 1 Cor. ii 11, 12, 13, 14. and many other places of ſcripture. The diſtinction I thus made between knowing that God is, and what he is, is maintained by the murring voice of Proteſtant authors. Mr. Anthony Burgeſs ſpeaks ſo, *Vind. leg. p.* 76. "Queſtion, whether a man by the light of nature, and by the conſideration of the creatures, can come to know that there is a God? This [ſaith he] is denied by Socinians and others. Indeed Bellarmine charges tenets to this effect upon Calvin. But that which the Proteſtant authors hold is, That he may indeed have the knowledge, that there is a God; but *what* this God is, whether he be one, or what his attributes are, they cannot ſo reach to: *Nihil notius, nihil ignotius.*" i. e. *Nothing is more known, nothing more unknown than God.*

Arrowſmith, on John i. p. 295. ſays, "Reaſon hath but three ways by which it comes to the knowledge of God; and they are known to *ſcholars* by theſe names, *via cauſalitatis, via negationis, & via eminentiæ*, &c. &c."——On the firſt he ſays, "Reaſon diſcovers a God, but not what God is in his being, only that he is; for no effect can ſhew the nature of its cauſe fully, but either ſuch as manifeſteth the whole force of the cauſe, or elſe ſuch as is not of the ſame kind with the cauſe; as burning, that ſhews the nature of the fire.—A child ſhews the nature of the father, becauſe of the ſame nature with the father: But the creatures cannot ſhew God; becauſe they are effects different from him: Neither are they of the ſame rank and kind with God, as the child is with the father. They are all of them finite; God is infinite. So that all that reaſon can do this way is to gather, *that* there is a God, but not *what* he is, &c."

Maſtricht, a learned divine and philoſopher both, in his diſputes againſt the Carteſian ideas of God, as he ſhews how the natural knowledge of God is not from any innate idea or image of God, but from the very being or eſſence of God, co existent with the underſtanding; ſo he makes remarkable uſe of the above diſtinction that I made, in anſwer to the Carteſian argument drawn from that vulgar maxim, *That nothing is in the underſtanding that is not firſt in the ſenſes.* But his words on

this ſubject, being only for the learned. I refer them to the foot of the page*. Mr. Robe would fain father his doctrine upon the ſcripture, That our ſenſes and imagination are greatly helpful to bring us to the knowledge of God, and of his perfections; as if that were the meaning of what the apoſtle aſſerts, Rom. i. 20. Acts xvii 27. and as if, becauſe ſome of the works of God are palpable, and our ſenſes can help us to feel them, therefore our ſenſes may help us to know the incorporeal being of God, as if that were palpable likewiſe. But, as Mr Robe's doctrine of ſenſes and imaginary ideas cannot ſtand before ſcripture light, ſo neither can it agree with the mind of ſound divines on that text, Rom. i. 19, 20. Dr. John Evans, the continuator of Henry, on it, ſays, "They [the Gentile world] had *ſome* even among them that had the knowledge of God, were convinced of the exiſtence of one ſupreme *Numen*. The philoſophy of Pythagoras, Plato, and the Stoicks diſcovered a great deal of the knowledge of God. But whence had they theſe diſcoveries? *God had ſhewed it unto them.* Thoſe common natural notions they had of God, were imprinted upon their heart by the God of nature himſelf, who is the *Father of lights.* This ſenſe of a Deity, and a regard to that Deity, is ſo connate with the human nature that ſome think we are to diſtinguiſh men from brutes by theſe, rather than by reaſon." And then he adds, "By what way and means theſe diſcoveries and notices they had, were *confirmed and improved*, viz. by the works of creation, ver. 20." *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* To this purpoſe others have alſo ſuppoſed, that theſe two verſes contain a twofold natural knowledge of

* Porro, 3 diſtinguendum quoque hic exiſtimamus inter rei *exiſtentiam*, & ejuſdem *eſſentiam*: adeoque licet res quoad ſuum *eſſentiam* non poſſit eſſe in intellectu quin fuerit in ſenſibus; omnino videtur aſſerendum attamen, rei *exiſtentiam* poſſe eſſe in intellectu, quæ nunquam fuerit in ſenſibus. Quamvis enim formæ ſubſtantiales (loquor ex hypotheſibus Peripateticorum, de quorum effato hic agitur) quoad *eſſentiam* ſeu *quidditatem* ſuam non ſunt in intellectu noſtro, quia nunquam fuerunt in ſenſibus; attamen quoad *exiſtentiam* ſeu *quodditatem* (barbariſmis ſcholaſticis Carteſiani ſunto, quæſo, propitii) omnino ſunt in intellectu: quamvis enim neſciat intellectus quid ſit forma canis, bovis, aſini, a parte ſui, novit tamen ex effectis, cani, bovi, adeſſe ſuam formam ſubſtantialem, prorſus ad eundum modo quo ex fumo colligo *exiſtentiam* ſeu præſentiam ignis, quamvis ipſam hujus ignis eſſentiam nec ſenſus nec intellectus perceperit. Plane eodem modo quamvis *eſſentiam* ſeu *quidditatem* Dei *intellectus noſter* non percipiat, eo quod nunquam fuerit in ſenſibus; attamen *exiſtentia* ſeu *quodditas* Dei ex creaturis per ſenſus omnino colligitur, & a *ſenſibus* ab intellectu percipitur, eo quod affectus infallibiliter arguat *exiſtentiam* ſuæ cauſæ ſecundæ juxta & primæ.

God, and both owing to the God of nature; the one *connate*, imprinted on the hearts and minds of all; the other *acquired*, through the rational contemplation of the creatures, which shew forth the glory of God's power, &c. and that the former of these is confirmed and improved by the latter. This distinction seems to be allowed in our *Confession*, chap. 1. § 1. where both the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, are spoke of as the helps and grounds of the natural knowledge of God. But did ever any divine till now say, that God was to be known by the help of our senses and imagination? It is true, the bodily eyes see the visible things of God; and so, by occasion thereof, natural reason and understanding may help. But can the bodily eyes help to see the invisible things of God? Indeed these *are clearly seen*, says the text. But how? *Being UNDERSTOOD*, says the same text, *by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* These things our senses and imaginations can give us no help to see; but the rational mind that God has given us, when he helps it to reason and argue, can help us to see and acknowledge these invisible things. *Hæc agnoscit mens* [says Marlorat on the text,] *intuens opificium Dei; nam ex multis vestigiis ratiocinatur ista Deo.* It is the common sentiment of orthodox divines, that there is a twofold natural knowledge of God, (as Mastricht asserts, *Gang. p.* 202.) not only that which arises from the contemplation of the creatures in a discussive way, reasoning from the effect to the cause, &c. which they call *acquired* knowledge, of which only some think, Rom. i. 19, 20. is to be understood; but also that knowledge of God which is (as it were) concreated with us, and *connate*, which the apostle asserts, Rom. ii. 14. On this subject Charnock speaks at large; whom I have occasion to cite afterward, viz. § 14. of this chapter.

The words of a notable Papist on that text, the eminent Pascal, Thoughts, p. 166. are remarkable. "The holy scripture informs us indeed, that the beauty of the creatures leads to the knowledge of the Creator; but it doth by no means assure us, that the creatures produce this effect indifferently in all persons. On the contrary, it declares, that, whenever they appear thus convincing, it is not by their own force, but by means of that light which God diffuseth into the heart of those to whom he is pleased to discover himself by their means, Rom. i. 19. *Because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.* It teaches, in general, that our God is a God that hides himself; and that, since the corruption of human nature, he hath left men under such a blindness as they can *only* be delivered from by Jesus Christ, *without whom we are cut off* from all communication with

Deity, Matth. xi. 27. *No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him*, &c." Afterward he says, "That it is by Jesus Christ alone that we can pretend to know God in such a manner as shall be savingly advantageous unto us. Jesus Christ, is not only God, but he is God under this character, the healer and repairer of our miseries. He alone is the true God to us men; that is, to miserable and sinful creatures. He is our chief centre and supreme object, in respect of all that we can wish, and all that we can understand. Whoever knows not him, knows nothing, either in the order of the world, or in his nature and conditions; for as we know God only by Jesus Christ, so it is by him alone we know ourselves." From the words of the judicious Pascal, two things are clear. *First*, That the knowledge of God's being from the creatures shewing that he is, is by no means owing to our sense or imagination, as our helps and assistants, as if the creatures themselves produced this effect whenever seen; but that it is owing to the light God diffuseth into the heart of those to whom he is pleased to discover himself by their means; according to Rom. i. 19. *Because that which may be known of God*, or is knowable by the light of nature, *is manifest in them*, or to them, as in the margin, Acts xiv. 17. *For God hath shewed it unto them*, namely, by that light of nature, and the rational consideration of the creature, as in verse 20. Our sense and sight of the creature is not the help; it is only the occasion; but it is God's light making known what is knowable of himself by the creature, and shewing it to us, that is the help to the knowledge of God *that* he is, and that he is wise and powerful, &c. *Secondly*, That by nature's light we cannot know *what* God is, or *what* these perfections are; *what* a Three one God he is, and *what* he is *to us*. Natural reason here fails. It is by Christ only, and by faith in him, that we know God to any real advantage; he alone being the true God to us men, sinful men. It is not by the help of our senses and imagination, nay nor by the help of natural reason itself, that we come to this knowledge of God in Christ, but only by the eye of faith; which is the *evidence of things not seen*, and by which we see that Christ is not only God, but God the Saviour, the true God, and the true Saviour, the true Christ, God in our nature. Without knowing him by faith we know nothing as we ought to know; nothing of God, nor of ourselves, nor of the order of the world, for *by faith we understand*, &c. Heb. xi. 3. *By reason we rather think and opine*, [says Dr. John Collings*] *than understand, and certainly know*. By nature we know something *of God darkly*, by knowing the creatures; but by grace and *by faith we know* ourselves, and the creatures, by knowing God.

* On Providence, p. 27.

aſt is the odds between ſeeing God in the light of the creature, nd ſeeing the creature in the light of God. *Faith is the evi-ence of things not ſeen*, and the *ſeeing of him that is inviſible*; nd by faith we underſtand. To this purpoſe alſo are theſe ords of Dr. Owen*: "The *vain mind* multiplies *vain* imagi-ations like the ſand upon the ſea-ſhore. Theſe are called the *ig-ments* of the hearts of men, Gen. vi. 5. which are found to e only *evil continually*. Theſe it feigns and frames, abundantly inging them forth, as the earth does graſs, or as a cloud ours out drops of water.—There was the ſame cogitative r imaginative faculty in us in the ſtate of innocency, as there emains under the power of ſin. But then, all the actings f it were *orderly* and regular.—God was and would have been he principal of them, and all other things in order unto him. ut now being turned off from him, the mind in them engageth n all manner of *confuſion*, and they all end in *vanity* and diſap-ointment. Hence the mind cannot *aſſent* unto the common rinciples of religion in a due manner, which yet it cannot deny. —Hereon, in converſion unto God, we are ſaid to have *our minds renewed*, Rom. xii. 2. and to be *renewed in the ſpirit of our minds*. By the mind the faculty itſelf is intended, the rational principle in us of apprehenſion, of thinking, diſcourſing, and *aſſenting*, &c.—The underſtanding, which guides the ſoul in the choice of the notions which it receives by the mind, is more corrupt than the mind itſelf; therefore it is ſaid to be *darkned*, yea *darkneſs*. And being ſo, it is wholly in vain to pretend to a ſufficiency in it to *diſcern ſpiritual things*, without a ſupernatural illumination."

Page 60, 61. Mr. Robe accuſes me of diſhoneſt dealing, for alledging, as he ſuppoſed, that our ſenſes and imagination can bring us to the ſufficient and ſaving knowledge of God. But, however he ſtates the matter, I think he wrongs himſelf more than I did, by his own aſſertion here, p. 61. "That though we cannot have the ſaving knowledge of God without the inward and effectual teaching of the Holy Spirit, yet, without the help of our ſenſes and imagination in an ordinary way, we cannot have that ſaving knowledge which is the effect of the Spirit's teaching." Here is ſtrange help that the Spirit of God muſt have, and without which his teaching ſignifies nothing unto ſalvation, namely, the help of our natural ſenſes and imagination. But what help theſe can give, I have already ſhewn, even no help at all, but hurt. If the Spirit cannot teach us ſavingly *without* this, then it will follow, that *with* this help the Spirit can; and ſo our ſenſes and imagination can at leaſt contribute to our being brought to the ſaving knowledge of God. Thus he fixes the charge upon himſelf, and is the firſt divine I ever knew publiſh *ſuch unguarded divinity*. But let us hear his reaſon, "Becauſe,

* *On the Spirit*, p. 211, 212.

(says he) all the knowledge of God, his nature and perfections that we have by the outward means of his works and word, which the Holy Ghost makes effectual, is attained by the *intervention* of our senses and imagination." Besides what I have said to this already, since hence he infers the senses and imagination are greatly helpful to bring us to the saving knowledge of God, I may here observe, that his argument proves too much; and therefore proves nothing at all, as logicians used to speak. Why? his argument is this: That *that* by the intervention whereof all the knowledge of God and his perfections is attained, is greatly helpful to the saving knowledge of him; but our senses and imagination are that by the intervention whereof all the knowledge of God is attained. *Therefore* our senses and imagination are greatly helpful to the saving knowledge of God and his perfections. This is evidently his argument. But I deny the *major*, or first proposition, as false; and therefore the conclusion will not hold, That that by the intervention whereof all the knowledge of God and his perfections is attained, is greatly helpful to the saving knowledge of him. That this, I say, is a false proposition, I prove thus: We have the knowledge of God and his perfections by the intervention of providence in many things, which yet are no ways helpful to the saving knowledge of him; and the use that God makes of these things, does not infer their helpfulness in themselves to this end. The argument here confounds occasions with helps; which yet ought to be kept distinct. It confounds occasions that God takes to himself for making himself known, with helps that he prescribes or gives to us for our knowing of him. The intervention of occasions that God takes *to himself*, may differ so much from interveening helps *for us*, that, instead of being helps, they may be hinderances in themselves to our knowledge of him, or communication with him. For example: The mountains of sin and guilt are the interveening occasions that God takes for making himself known unto his people under the character of a *roe* skipping on the mountains, and leaping on the hills, in kindness and love to their souls. Are mountains of sin and guilt therefore to be reckoned helps to the knowledge of Christ, because it is obtained by the intervention of these? Nay, in themselves are they not hinderances to the knowledge of God, and communion with him? Thus also our natural senses and carnal imagination, (for no other sort have we since the fall of Adam), whatever occasion God may take from them to make them subservient sometimes to good purposes; yet, in themselves, they are not interveening helps to the knowledge of God, but rather hinderances and impediments. If I see a part of a flinty rock upon the road which I pass, this *can be no way* helpful to me in itself toward the knowledge of any *spiritual thing*; but the grace of God may make it an occasion of *my thinking* upon my own stony heart, and the necessity of the

ſoft heart promiſed in the covenant of grace. Senſe gazing on a flinty rock with the bodily eye, whatever occaſion it may give to the faith of ſuch as are ſpiritually minded; yet to ſuppoſe it can give help to the knowledge of a hard heart, which is inviſible by bodily eyes, or any proper aſſiſtance to heavenly thoughts, is as abſurd as the fool's act in the comedy, that, looking with his eyes, and pointing with his finger *to the earth*, cried out, *O coelum! O heavens!* But of this argument more will occur afterwards.

Mr Robe ſeems to confirm what he laſt ſaid by the following words: "The works of God and the ſacraments manifeſt him to us by the eye, as does alſo the word read by us, and the word preached, or otherways taught, by the ear. And now [ſays he] Mr. Erſkine hath what I aſſert at large. He may try his hand with them when he pleaſes." Here indeed Mr. Robe brings himſelf as near to orthodoxy as he can; and, as I have expreſſed myſelf ſometimes to that purpoſe, as he does here, ſo I would be loth to diſpute againſt him in this way of ſpeaking, were it not that he brings it in to corroborate and eſtabliſh his doctrine of imaginary ideas, making our ſenſes and imagination proper helps and aſſiſtants to the ſaving knowledge of God, &c. For thus he explains this doctrine, p. 10. "All the knowledge we acquire of God and ſpiritual things by outward means, is conveyed to us by ſeeing and hearing. The ſenſible ſigns, whether the works or word of God leave their ſpecies or image upon the imagination, which is ever afterwards helpful to the other faculties, by preſenting the images of theſe ſigns unto them." Why then, Mr. Robe's meaning is, All the knowledge of God we have by hearing his word read or preached, and by ſeeing his works, and the ſenſible ſigns in the ſacraments, is attained by the intervention of our ſenſes and imagination; which are helpful to that ſaving knowledge of God and his perfections, by preſenting the images of theſe ſigns unto them; theſe ſenſible ſigns, whether the works or word of God, having left their ſpecies or image upon the imagination. This indeed is the doctrine that I oppoſe, as not the doctrine of faith, but of fancy. And I would expreſs myſelf in oppoſition to it in the notable words we have, *Morning Exerciſes*, vol. v. p. 231. ſpeaking againſt Popiſh imagery and idolatry, relating to the ſacramental ſupper of our Lord. The words are: "Faith herein reſpects the peculiar way of the communication and exhibition of Chriſt unto us by ſymbols or ſenſible outward ſigns of bread and wine. It finds the divine wiſdom and ſovereignty of Chriſt in the choice of them, having no other foundation in reaſon, or the light of nature. *And the repreſentation that is made herein of him, with the benefits of his death* and oblation, is ſuited unto faith

only, without any aid of ſenſe and imagination; for although the ſymbols are viſible, yet their relation unto the thing ſignified is not diſcernable unto any *ſenſe* or *reaſon*. Had he choſen for this end an image or a crucifix, or any ſuch actions as did, by a kind of natural and ſenſible reſemblance, ſhew forth his paſſion, and what he did and ſuffered, there had been no need of faith in this matter." Thus, as what is viſible in the ſacrament, and to be ſeen by ſenſible ſigns, is ſuited unto faith only, without any aid of ſenſe and imagination, otherways, if all were the object of the ſenſe of ſeeing, there would be no need of faith; ſo I may ſay the ſame about hearing the word, or the reading of it: As theſe are mere natural acts of the ear and eye, or of the bodily ſenſes as ſuch, they belong not at all to religion; no more than the hearing of ſounds and voices, or the viewing of words and letters: And in this reſpect indeed they may be helpful to form the image of ſounds upon the letters upon the mind. But, when it is ſaid, *that faith cometh by hearing*, it muſt be ſome other ſort of hearing than this: For it is immediately added, *and hearing by the word of God*; intimating, that faith comes not immediately or properly by the hearing of ſounds with the bodily ear, for ſo beaſts hear as well as men, and are ſtartled if it be a thundering voice, or a loud ſound, impreſſing them according as it ſtrikes their imagination; but God works upon men as rational creatures, and ſays to them, as Pſal. xxxii. 9. "*Be not ye as the horſe or the mule, which have no underſtanding*. And therefore faith comes firſt and more immediately by a rational hearing, attending unto the word of God, or the truths heard. The bodily ear, as it belongs ſimply to the animal life, may hear ſounds and voices; but it cannot hear the word of God, nor any truth of God, as more than the ear of a beaſt, ſeparate from the rational nature, which God works upon by his word of truth: Which truth is the object of faith, and cannot be the object of ſenſe, or an imaginary idea; for truth, (as I ſaid,) hath no bodily ſhape, nor audible voice; none can form an image of it in his mind by imagination.

Therefore it is not *hearing* in Mr. Robe's ſenſe that faith cometh by. Images and imaginary ideas may come by this way of hearing; but the knowledge of God and of truth, and of things inviſible, cometh by the hearing of faith. 'Tis not fancy but faith comes by right hearing. There is no hearing where there is no rational hearing. Blind ignorance, however devout, cannot pleaſe God. Hearing, if it be not rational, or if without knowledge, is neither the mean of faith, nor acceptable to God: *Bonum enim non eſt, quod non eſt rationabiliter bonum*. Tertul. adverſ. Marc. lib. 1. This is cited by Davenant in Col. i. q. as a wiſe ſaying, viz. *Nothing is good that is not reaſonably ſo*. To rational creatures God requires reaſonable ſervice.

SECT. XII.

Page 61. "Before I leave this ſubject, [ſays Mr. Robe,] according to the moſt feaſible way of dealing with my ſort of adverſaries, I ſhall ſhew why divinity is that of other ſound divines, as theirs is not." Mr. Robe might have ſuſpended his boaſting of authorities as wholly upon his ſide, till matters were tried. He cities here Burgeſs and Manton. Firſt, "Burgeſs, on *original ſin* p. 351. ſays, *The imaginative power or phantaſy in a man is immediately ſubſervient to the underſtanding in its operation*; and, p. 353. *hath ſome dependence upon it*." Though I have not this book of Burgeſs by me at preſent, to try if he has done him juſtice; yet, taking it for granted that the quotation is fair, what can Mr. Robe thence infer? Is it, that the imagination and fancy is greatly helpful to bring us to the ſaving knowledge of God? Yea, but this will by no means follow. For,

1. Mr. Robe ſpeaks as if he were on a ſubject of divinity, explaining ſome moral help, mean, or duty requiſite to the ſaving knowledge of God: But Mr. Burgeſs, in that expreſſion, ſeems to be upon a quite other ſubject, namely, a point of philoſophy, not reſpecting the moral law, nor God's moral government of the world of mankind; but reſpecting the natural law of God towards creatures as creatures, or men as men; not as chriſtians, or ſubjects of his moral government, but ſimply as creatures, ſuſtained by him as the God of nature and providence. Hence Mr. Burgeſs ſpeaks only of the natural ſubſerviency and dependence of one natural faculty upon another; which none can deny: But Mr. Robe confounds theſe together, by ſaying, that our ſenſes and imaginations are greatly helpful to bring us to the ſaving knowledge of God. Which abſurd way of ſpeaking, it is impoſſible for him to exemplify from any divine that ever wrote. For,

2. Things may be ſubſervient to, and dependent upon one another by the law of nature, that God has made to the creature, and the law of providence, that God has made for himſelf in ſuſtaining the animal world; and yet not properly helpful to one another, far leſs to ſpiritual purpoſes. God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, can make things that are oppoſite and deſtructive to one another, to be ſubſervient to each other. For example, the fall of the firſt Adam was made ſubſervient to the revelation of the ſecond; and ſo to the knowledge of God in Chriſt: Yet who will ſay that Adam's ſin was helpful to this effect? *Cæſar's* decree *that all the world ſhould be taxed*, was ſubſervient to Chriſt's being born at Bethlehem, Luke ii. 1. yet was Cæſar's decree properly helpful thereto? The ſin of crucifying the Lord of glory *was ſubſervient* to the great bleſſing of our redemption *by the blood of Chriſt*; was that ſin ther fore properly helpful *to it? The ſins and falls* of the ſaints are made ſubſervient

five ſenſes, to let out thoughts, and to take in objects; to *taſte* the goodneſs of God in the creatures, and *ſee* divinity in them, and *hear* the voice by which they proclaim the glory of God. Page 53. Meditation upon the creatures is a work that is of great profit, partly to heighten fancy, and make it fit for meditation. O practiſe upon the creation, and you will find fancy to be much elevated and raiſed! Page 256. Man's reaſon is lower than that of angels, becauſe it needs the miniſtery of *fancy* and *imagination*. *Fancy* needs *outward ſenſe*, which an angel needs not." Now, as to this paſſage,

1. It makes as much for Mr. Robe's purpoſe as the former, and no more; for certainly he cites it as exactly agreeable to the former. Manton, no doubt, underſtands the bodily ſenſes here as ſubſervient for ſpiritual uſes to believers, through the bleſſing of God, and the operation of his Spirit. He ſpeaks of objects of ſenſe taken in ſpiritually; not in carnal images of outward things, but by ſpiritual thought and meditation upon the moſt ſpiritual things: For the *goodneſs* of God cannot be *eaten* carnally with the mouth; but the natural eating may occaſion ſpiritual views of it. *Divinity* in the creature cannot be *ſeen* with the bodily eye; but the ſight of the creatures of God may occaſion ſpiritual and believing views of God therein. The *voice* by which the creature proclaims the glory of God, cannot be *heard* by the outward ear; but outward hearing may occaſion (through grace) the ſpiritual and believing conſideration of what God ſpeaks by them. *Divinity*, which Manton ſpeaks of in this metaphorical way, being a ſpiritual object, can neither be taſted, ſeen, or heard with bodily ſenſes; yea Mr. Robe will own it cannot be the object of an imaginary idea: How then can mental images of taſting of meats, ſeeing of bodies, hearing of voices, be helpful to the underſtanding of *divinity* in the creature? Theſe images may indeed be occaſions to a rational ſoul, and eſpecially to a ſpiritually-minded man, to think of God, and to think ſpiritually; but that they can be called properly *helps*, I deny. If any ſhould call theſe innumerable occaſions given us from the viſible heavens above, or the earth below, by the name of *helps* and *teachers*, to bring us to the knowledge of God, it is not properly, but figuratively and metaphorically ſpoken: For, if they were properly natural helps in themſelves, then every man would naturally ſee divinity in every creature which he looks at. But as the bodily eye ſees nothing but corporeal things, and the natural imagination forms no other than corporeal images; ſo when theſe come in to be proper teachers and helps to the underſtanding, can they give any ſpiritual underſtanding of ſpiritual things? Or rather will they not natively teach leſſons of imagery and idolatry, inſtead of bringing to the true and ſaving knowledge of God? They are *teachers of lies*, and their leſſons *the doctrine of vanity*.

2. This paſſage ſeems to be quoted by Mr. Robe in ſupport of his doctrine of fancy, as a help to faith. But, if by *fancy* Mr. Robe mean the imaginary idea of things corporeal, or the images thereof, then I think the higher it is raiſed and elevated, it is ſtill the worſe. Meditation upon the creature, or the works of God, I underſtand, as an exerciſe that may be moſt ſpiritual; yea it is ſuch a neceſſary exerciſe, that *wo* is denounced againſt *them who regard not the work of the Lord, and conſider not the operation of his hands*, Iſa. v. 12. Pſalm xxviii. 5. This is an exerciſe of the intellectual faculty, and of underſtanding and judgment. But as for fancy and imagination, they are no part of ſpiritual exerciſe, but of *bodily*, which *profits little*. Yet it is true what Manton ſays, *Reaſon needs the miniſtry of fancy and imagination; and fancy needs outward ſenſe*; if the miniſtry of ſenſe and fancy unto reaſon be underſtood of ſuch a ſubſerviency, as to miniſter occaſions to it. For forms and repreſentations in the fancy, as all figures and metaphors from corporeal things, yield innumerable occaſions naturally unto reaſon and underſtanding, but no help in a proper ſenſe; for, whenever they come to help the underſtanding, they hurt it, and blind it with images; and, on that account, are to be expelled, as enemies: Therefore, ſays Anthony Burgeſs, according as Mr. Robe himſelf cites him, *letter* 2. p. 9. *It is the duty of the underſtanding to expel them*. Whereas, if they were proper helps, or greatly helpful, or abſolutely neceſſary in themſelves to the ſaving knowledge of God, they ought to be received, embraced, and entertained. But a man needs never put away the occaſions of ſpiritual contemplation, taken from outward repreſentations: He can never look too much through created things to their uncreated author and original. But this he can never do by the help and aſſiſtance of his ſenſes and imagination, but by the help of reaſon, and eſpecially of ſanctified reaſon, and ſaving faith, making ſpiritual improvement of temporal and viſible things; which may help his natural fancy to form images, but cannot help his ſpiritual underſtanding to form any views of its ſpiritual objects.

If by fancy Manton underſtand the ſame things that Mr. Robe does by our ſenſe and imagination, the object whereof is only things corporeal, then let fancy be elevated never ſo high, it cannot riſe above its own ſphere to ſpiritual things. Yet ſuch is our natural conſtitution, and, by our fall, reaſon is ſo much ſunk into ſenſe, that we are become like brute beaſts, and can ſcarce act rationally, unleſs occaſion be given to our underſtanding by ſenſation, or by the repreſentation of outward objects. And natural ſenſation gives occaſion to rational reflection, where there is a rational ſoul, or where ſenſe and reaſon are naturally joined: But that ſenſation can give no help properly by itſelf to *this* reflection;

otherwise natural ſenſation in brute beaſts might contribute to make them rational, becauſe their ſenſe and imagination might be greatly helpful to it. Alſo, the rational ſoul ſeparate from the body would, one might think, ceaſe to be rational, becauſe deſtitute of theſe ſenſes and imaginations that are ſaid to be ſo greatly helpful and abſolutely neceſſary in the united ſtate of ſoul and body. Yea, at this rate, if a man was in ſuch circumſtances, whereof there hath been other inſtances, like that of Paul, when his ſoul was quite out of his body, *for what he knew*, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3. then that ſoul of his behoved to be deprived of reaſon, or the exerciſe of it, while deprived of theſe bodily ſenſes, that are ſuppoſed to be ſo greatly helpful and abſolutely neceſſary. But how abſurd theſe things are, is obvious. Therefore I ſay, our ſenſes and imagination can give no help properly to bring us to reaſon or ſpiritual underſtanding; though they may give innumerable occaſions to the rational ſoul to deduce ſpiritual concluſions from viſible and imaginable things. If ſenſe and imagination come in to help any other way, they come like the devil, to tempt, inſtead of coming to help; for they can give no help but ſuch as is ſuited to their nature; that is, to help the underſtanding to conceive of incorporeal things in a corporeal way, or under corporeal forms, figures and images; which is the greateſt hurt, inſtead of help; and juſt ſuch help as carnal ſenſe and mere natural reaſon would give to faith; that is, to conceive of ſpiritual things in a carnal and natural way; comparing ſpiritual things only with natural, as man's wiſdom teaches, and *not ſpiritual things with ſpiritual, as the Holy Ghoſt teaches*, 1 Cor. 2. 13. If imaginary ideas, by the means of our ſenſes and imaginations, do naturally attend our meditations of God and of divine things, they never attend as helps to further, but as devils to mar our ſpiritual meditations. I might appeal to all that ever knew the plague of their own hearts, if they do not know to their ſad experience, how many thouſand vain imaginations, relating to God or Chriſt or heaven, will paſs through their minds, from morning to evening; and yet never one of theſe vain and vile imaginary ideas contribute in the leaſt to bring in, or help to one ſpiritual thought; but rather ſtand up like mountains, in the way of all ſpiritual contemplations, even when theſe are attempted. Whenever a perſon mint at being ſpiritual, theſe corporeal images and imaginations, whether he will or not, force him to be carnal, till the mighty power of God caſt down theſe ſtrong holds of Satan, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Something of ſenſe indeed, as Charnock ſays, will interpoſe itſelf in our pureſt conception of ſpiritual things; but then, this interpoſition of ſenſe in theſe pure conceptions, inſtead of being helpful, *is as hurtful* to it, as nature is to grace, and fancy to faith. *Hence the*

Third authority Mr. Robe produces will be found as little his purpoſe as the former, p. 62. "See alſo [ſays he] the former paſſage from Charnock." And ſo he refers, I ſuppoſe, to page 8. and 9. where in p. 8. beſides the words of Charnock I juſt now mentioned, it is added, "The faculties hich ſerve for contemplation, are either corporeal, as the nſe and fancy, or ſo allied to them, that nothing paſſes in- them but by the organs of the body; [namely] while we e in the body, and ſurrounded with fleſhly matter." Now, hat can Mr. Robe hence infer for his purpoſe? Is it, that r ſenſes and imaginations are greatly helpful to the underſtanding, for bringing us to the ſaving knowledge of God? ne may as well infer, if a perſon be ſhut up in a priſon that ith ſome grate through which he can ſee objects that are ithout in the fields, that therefore theſe grates are greatly lpful to his eye, to make him ſee the fields. The window a paſſage for the ſight to get without the boundaries of ie priſon; but to ſay it is a proper help to the ſight, is very bſurd. Even ſo the rational ſoul is, as it were, incloſed ithin a priſon of fleſh while here: What though the bodily enſes or bodily organs be like windows of the dark priſon, y which light gets in, and ſight gets out; are therefore heſe fleſhly windows greatly helpful to the ſpiritual eye of he ſoul, or to its ſpiritual ſight of the ſpiritual objects that re without? Why, in this ſenſe, no doubt, they are helpful s they are paſſages and occaſions to get out of priſon: But o ſay that they are properly helpful to the ſeeing faculty of he ſoul, is as abſurd, as to ſay, that, becauſe the window f the priſon makes way for ſeeing without, therefore it is a eat help to the ſight of the eye. Which is very abſurd: r it is a confounding the proper help of ſight, with that hich is only the providential occaſion and opportunity given ſee. A man's paſſing by me, may give me an occaſion to e him; but it would be very improper language to ſay, that was a great help to my ſight of him. Perhaps, if he had me much nearer or cloſer to me, his body might have blind- my eye: Whereas proper helps to ſeeing, the nearer they e, the more ſerviceable. Even ſo outward objects preſent- by ſenſe or fancy to the underſtanding, may give occaſion ſpiritual improvements; but they are ſo far from being roper helps, that the nearer they are brought to the intel- ctual faculty, the more is it blinded and darkened with orporeal ſhadows and images, inſtead of ſpiritual objects iting its nature. *However*, this is all the proof Mr. Robe *ath for his point from this* paſſage.

Another paſſage of Charnock's that he cites, p. 9 is this: "Whatſoever we think or ſpeak of God, is handed firſt to us by the notice we have of ſome perfection in the creature; and explains to us ſome particular excellency of God, rather than the fulneſs of his eſſence. God in his word is pleaſed to ſtep below his own excellency, and point us to thoſe excellencies in his works, whereby we may aſcend to the knowledge of thoſe excellencies which are in his nature. We cannot poſſibly think or ſpeak of God, unleſs we transfer the names of created perfections to him; yet we are to conceive of them in a higher manner when we apply them to the divine nature, than when we conſider them in the ſeveral creatures formally, exceeding thoſe perfections and excellencies which are in the creature, and in a more excellent manner: As one ſaith, Though we cannot comprehend God without the help of ſuch reſemblances, *yet we may, without making an image of him*, [this Mr. Robe marks with a different character, as anſwering much to his purpoſe:] So that inability of ours excuſeth thoſe apprehenſions of him from any way offending againſt his divine nature." Theſe words of Charnock's I eaſily agree with: But Mr. Robe's view of them may be gathered from what he inſtantly ſubjoins, p. 10. "All the knowledge [ſays he] we can acquire of God and ſpiritual things by outward means, is conveyed to us by ſeeing or hearing. The ſenſible ſigns, whether the works or word of God, leave their ſpecies or image upon the imagination; which is ever afterwards helpful to the other facu ties, by preſenting the images of thoſe ſigns unto them: He means to the underſtanding, or ſuperior intellectual faculties of the ſoul. Here then Mr. Robe and the author whom he cites, ſeem to differ exceedingly. Mr. Charnock ſpeaks of ſuch helps of outward reſemblances as human underſtanding can take occaſion to improve toward the knowledge of God and ſpiritual things, without making any image of him or them; and ſo without offending againſt his divine nature. But Mr. Robe will have images brought in upon the underſtanding, if poſſible, by explaining, in his way, how our ſenſes and imagination are helpful to the underſtanding, namely, by preſenting images to it; and ſo would ſeem to demonſtrate, if he agree with Charnock and himſelf, both that the way how our ſenſes and imagination are helpful to apprehend God, without making an image of him, is by preſenting ſome image to the underſtanding; and that the way how the imagination is helpful *and ſerviceable* to the knowledge of ſpiritual and *inviſible things*, is by preſenting to the underſtanding the *ſpecies or images* of corporeal and viſible things, left upon *the imagination* by ſenſible ſigns, whether in God's word

s Thus the cure and help of mental imagery would be
eſenting images to the underſtanding; where the cure
to be as ill as the diſeaſe. I doubt not but, if Charnock
alive, he would be aſhamed of ſuch a way of adopting
xpreſſions. *God ſerves himſelf*, ſays Charnock, [cited by
elſewhere,] *of theſe things that are moſt expoſed to
uſes, moſt obvious to our underſtanding, to give us ſome ac-
ſtance with his own nature, and of theſe things which otherwiſe
ere not capable of having any notion of.* This I willingly
ibe to; becauſe here no proper helpfulneſs to our under-
ing is aſcribed (as Mr Robe does) to our ſenſes and i-
nation, but only the providential ſubſerviency, by God's
ig himſelf of them, and making them occaſions of giving
ne acquaintance with him: Whereas, when they are made
r helps by preſenting their picture and image, they are
elps as it is not lawful for the underſtanding to receive,
uſt inſtantly reject, with abhorrence, and expel.
e only real help then that outward ſenſe can be ſuppoſed
ve to the underſtanding is not by ſenſe itſelf; but is
ly occaſional and providential. The help that Mr. Robe
s it gives, is not real, but imaginary and fanciful, tending
nd the underſtanding through ſhadows, forms, figures,
res and images of corporeal things. The underſtanding
take occaſion, as the learned De Vries ſays, ſometimes
material things to deduce views of what is immaterial;
carnal things it may ſometimes take occaſion to deduce
ghts of ſpiritual things: Whatever good uſe the under-
ing makes of theſe things, flows not from any help they
by their images in the mind, but from providence afford-
natter and occaſion of thought. This is all the help that
enſes, imagination and fancy give as they are *natural*;
ly, materials and occaſions of thought to the rational
to improve upon: But no proper help can they give for
purpoſe. Again, if they be conſidered as *carnal*, and thus
are in all mankind ſince the fall, they give merely mat-
nd occaſion of vain thoughts, by obtruding on the under-
ling nothing but images; which, inſtead of giving help
are ſo hurtful, that the underſtanding can act to no pur-
till it baniſh all ſuch forms, figures, and images that the
preſents; for the underſtanding cannot act like itſelf,
t remove the objects of ſenſe and fancy, and the images
rporeal things, and betake itſelf to ſpiritual objects, ſuit-
its intellectual nature. Natural *ſenſe* and imagination is
helpful to apprehend corporeal objects and viſible crea-
. *Natural reaſon* is the only help to the natural unde-
ing of God and ſpiritual things by the creatures; t

faith of God's operation is the only help to the ſpiritual underſtanding of things divine and ſupernatural, exhibit in the word of God. Natural reaſon, aſſiſted and enlightened by the objective revelation of the ſcripture, may have a very great reach toward the ſpeculative and notional knowledge of ſpiritual things; but ſaving faith only is the help to ſaving and ſanctifying knowledge: *By faith we underſtand*, Heb. xi. 3. Though, in one ſenſe, by knowledge and underſtanding we believe; yet, in another, by faith we know and underſtand.

But, not to deviate from the preſent purpoſe, what I have ſaid, tends, I think, to diſcover the weakneſs and inſufficiency of Mr. Robe's alledged authorities upon his ſide. However, he boaſts greatly of them, ſaying, "From all this it is now evident, [p. 62.] that our ſenſes and imagination are not only helpful to us, to think upon the nature and perfections of God, but, while we are in the body, abſolutely neceſſary to our attaining to the knowledge of God; and that Mr. Fiſher's and Erſkine's contrary aſſertion is alſo contrary both to ſcripture and reaſon." Here one would think very deep divinity is ſpoken, with a very great ſolemnity; and what does it come to? Even that a body with the five ſenſes, and a faculty of imagination, is not only helpful to us to think upon the nature and perfections of God, but abſolutely neceſſary to our attaining to the ſaving knowledge of God, as elſewhere; and that they are thus helpful, even *as they are natural powers and faculties*; for ſo he ſays towards the foot of this ſame page. So that theſe natural ſenſes and fancies, even as ſuch, have this great honour of being abſolutely neceſſary helps to ſaving knowledge aſcribed to them. If matters be ſo, what a pity is it, that, ſince he ſpeaks of ſcripture, no *ſcripture* is yet produced for this doctrine, but ſuch as proves it to be unſcriptural? and that, ſince *reaſon* is ſpoken of, no *reaſon* hath been given for it, but what declares it to be unreaſonable? Yea, if this doctrine of Mr. Robe's were ſcriptural, rational and true, what a pity it is, that no ſtandard of doctrine, no confeſſion of faith in the chriſtian world, did ever to this day make mention of ſuch an abſolutely neceſſary help to the ſaving knowledge of God; and that no divine that wrote upon divinity, ever made any mention of it in Mr. Robe's way of expreſſing it till now? while yet the thing is ſo eaſy and natural, that no man or woman ever was or will be in the world, without being furniſhed with theſe abſolutely neceſſary helps *to ſaving* faith and ſaving knowledge, namely, natural ſenſe *and natural* imagination. Here is natural divinity indeed, *and carnal doctrine* exhibiting very carnal helps. Mr. Robe

ms, but needs not be offended at the name *carnal*, when
ne of God's own ordinances are called by God himself *car-*
l ordinances, Heb. ix 10. He speaks of these natural senses
d imaginations, as if they were divine ordinances,
d divine helps to the saving knowledge of God. And,
ough they be indeed divine gifts from the God of nature,
d might be called, on that account divine ordinances
o, yet they are such *carnal ordinances* and *carnal helps*, and
h unsuccessful ones that these carnal senses and imagina-
ns of men are the greatest hinderances and impediments of
oking upon God and his perfections, and the strongest bars
d lets in the way of the saving knowledge of God; as is
ident from the experience almost of all mankind, as well
from the scriptures of truth, declaring that *the carnal mind*
enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither
deed can be; That the natural man receiveth not the things of
Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him: Neither can he
ow them, for they are spiritually discerned: That natural imagi-
ions, that is, *reasonings*, 2 Cor x 5. in the higher, as well
fancy, in the lower faculties of the soul, *and every high*
ng in man exalteth itself against the knowledge of God

But Mr. Robe may say, these faculties, as they are carnal
d corrupt, are hinderances; but, as they are natural, they
e necessary helps as he elsewhere speaks. It is true, the
ace of God in regeneration does not destroy the natural
culties, they still remain; yet it renews them as much as
they did not remain, but were quite removed: *For old*
ngs are done away, and all things made new; the old heart is
ken away, and a new heart given; the old natural faculties
e changed, and new spiritual faculties given, before ever
ey be capable of giving any help toward the saving know-
dge of God.

SECT. XIII.

Mr. Robe says, p 62, 63. "The question is not, Whether
e imagination, and other faculties, as corrupt and unsancti-
ed [in the Heathen] hindered from attaining all that know-
dge of God taught by the visible things of the creation, and
bused what was attained; which is not controverted? but,
Whether we are greatly helped by these powers, *as natural*
wers and faculties, to attain unto the knowledge of God, and
h as without them we cannot? The contrary to this is what
r Erskine should have proven, seeing he so confidently asserts,
hat our senses and imaginations, (that is, these natural pow-
and faculties, for it is of them, under this consideration

all along in this controverſy they are ſpoken of), inſtead o being greatly helpful to us, do greatly hinder us, to think upo the nature and perfections of God. But this is what he hat not done; and ſhall never be able to do, unleſs he can prove that the natural eſſential powers God hath given to us as men are not helpful to us; but we would know God much bette if we wanted them: That is to ſay, a man would attain th knowledge of God's nature and perfections by the viſible things of the creation much better he were blind, deaf, withou feeling, and the other ſenſes, and without the faculty of ima gination. This is the total amount of that impertinent jum ble of ſcriptures Mr Erſkine hath, p. 55, 56, 57. I am afrai he won't get many, even Seceders, that will chuſe to put hi concluſion to the trial." On theſe words I may remark,

1. One would think, that the ſpeaker here was acting grave ly like a divine, when he ſpeaks of great helps to the know ledge of God and his perfections; and yet, before the ſen tence is at an end, one will hardly know whether he ſpeak in jeſt or in earneſt. That he is in earneſt in his bitter inveh againſt me, is evident: But, if he be in earneſt in his argu ment, he is then making manifeſt his groſs ignorance, both o philoſophy and divinity, reaſon and religion. This I prov by remarking,

2. That he makes the five natural ſenſes of the body, as they are natural ſenſes and natural powers, to be greatly helpful to the knowledge of God in his divine nature and perfections. If ſo, then, wherever theſe ſenſes are as natural powers, they muſt be natural helps to this end. But ſo it is, that, in horſes and dogs, and rats, and many other creatures, theſe natural ſenſes are given to them by the God of nature as natural powers; for they ſee others creatures and bodily things about them, they hear voices, and have all the reſt of the bodily ſenſes; which yet cannot in theſe creatures be helpful to the knowledge of God: Yet this behoved to be, if they were greatly helpful *as they are natural powers*.

3. Might it not have been expected that Mr. Robe would have ſaid, that they were greatly helpful to the knowledge of God, as they are ſubſervient to the rational faculties, or as they are bleſſed of God for that end? Which yet would not make good ſenſe, if accurately conſidered; for, where he bleſſes, he ſpiritualiſes and metamorphoſes them. But to ſay they are greatly helpful, as they are natural powers, to the *attaining* the knowledge of God, and his nature and perfections, is to make a neceſſary connection between the lowest *corporeal* actions of the animal life, and the higheſt ſpiritual *attainments* of the rational ſoul. For,

4. I remark, it is *reason*, and not *ſenſe* that is the only help to attain the natural knowledge of God and his perfections. Why, but ſays Mr. Robe, without ſenſes and imagination, or without eyes to ſee the viſible things of the creation, or natural powers of ſenſation, we cannot poſſibly know God by the creature. Here again is a miſerable confounding of a twofold knowledge; the knowledge of the *creature* by *ſenſe*, and the knowledge of the *Creator* by *reaſon*; or the knowledge of corporeal things by our ſenſitive and imaginative powers, and the knowledge of incorporeal, inviſible and ſpiritual things by our rational and intellectual powers. What though we cannot ſee or know the inhabitant of ſuch a houſe, without going in by the door, or looking in at the window of the houſe; are therefore the doors and window properly helps to my ſight and knowledge of the inhabitants? Even ſo, what though natural ſenſation or bodily ſenſes, which *Manton* compares to *holes bored through the body*, are like doors and windows, without paſſing of which the rational ſoul cannot ſee or apprehend theſe external objects, which gives occaſions to reaſon and reflection: is it therefore by the help of theſe doors and windows of ſenſe that we reaſon and reflect? doors and windows have no eyes to let us ſee and know thoſe that are within the houſe: As little have the eyes and ears, and natural ſenſes of the body any rational eyes or intellectual faculties to let us ſee and know the divine nature and perfections of God. Therefore, as they are natural powers merely ſenſitive and corporeal, they can be no ways helpful to our knowing of God, or things inviſible. Yea, as doors and windows, by which we enter a houſe, are no ways helpful to our faculty of ſeeing and knowing thoſe that are within the houſe; ſo, if we ſhall make uſe of theſe material doors and windows as helps to our ſight, and ſet them before our eyes, inſtead of helping, they will greatly hinder and mar our ſeeing and knowing of the inhabitants; becauſe we would but look at doors and windows, inſtead of looking in by them. Even ſo, if perſons be taken up with the objects of ſenſe and fancy, corporeal things and images, inſtead of helping, it will greatly hinder and obſtruct the knowledge of God and ſpiritual things. I have ground therefore, from ſolid reaſon, and the nature of things, that differ as much as body and ſpirit, whoſe natural powers and properties being naturally diſtinct, cannot interfere, ſo as to invade each others provinces, or leap over the boundaries that God and nature hath ſet to them ſeverally,) to aſſert, that our ſenſes and imaginations, *as they are natural powers* and faculties, inſtead of bein

helpful to us to think upon the nature and perfectio God, do greatly hinder us; because they can have no but corporeal objects.

As in the point of spiritual knowledge it is said, *The ral man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*, notwithl ing all his natural powers, whether of sense or reason, 1 ii. 14. because this saving knowledge of God is only b help of saving faith and gospel light: so, in the na knowledge of God by the visible works of creation, it i in nature, that our senses and imaginations viewing, or p things, can give us any help properly to think upon or know his nature and perfections. God never gave us c real powers to help us to contemplate incorporeal and s ual objects; but he hath given rational and intellectual ers for that end. Therefore I say again: that *reason* and not our senses and imaginations, is the help that hath given, even to natural men, for that purpose; thereby a capacity to reflect and think upon a sup being, the author all these visible works of creation. every man that is come to the exercise of reason, hat this much given him of God, as to employ his reason ought, in thinking upon God; for it is said of the gen ity of natural men, that *God is not in all their thoughts*. Th reason be given to them to help them to think upon yet they do not think upon him, till God himself hel reason he gave them, and some way shew himself to the enabling their rational powers to reflect upon the inv author of these visible works that they see. Rom. i. 19. *which is known of God, is manifested in them; for God hath s it unto them*. So that sense and imagination, as they are ral powers (as Mr. Robe calls them) helping to know no but outward objects, are in themselves hinderances, ir of being properly helps to know God and think upon h spiritual objects. And *reason* is the only natural help t natural knowledge of God by the creature; or rather himself helping natural reason to this exercise, accordi the forecited scripture. Thus I have proven, both from ture and reason, what Mr. Robe said I had not done should never be able to do: And, whether he shall be al give a reply or not I take not upon me to determine; bu bold to say, he shall never be able to answer to God for carnal doctrine and loose divinity.

To say, that our senses and imagination, or imag *ideas, are greatly* helpful or subservient to the knowled *God, and to saving* faith, because we cannot have th

at the other, is a fallacious impoſition upon human un-
ding; as if one ſhould ſay, that, becauſe while we are
body we cannot reaſon or argue without bodies, there-
ir bodies are greatly helpful to our reaſoning and ar-
faculties: Whereas it is known, our dull earthly bodies
equently very great impediments and hinderances to
tional and intellectual exerciſes. The body is helpful
own place for bodily things; but not properly for ſpi-
. Our feet, for example, are greatly helpful to our
g upon the earth; but are not therefore greatly help-
our walking upon the ſea. If a man, by a miraculous
, were enabled with Peter, to walk upon the water,
he could not do ſo without feet; becauſe whatever ele-
ne may be ſaid to walk upon, ſuppoſe fire, water, earth
while we are in the body, we cannot walk otherwiſe
th our feet: But will it follow therefore, that our feet
eat helps to us to walk upon the water; becauſe, pro-
ſpeaking, we cannot walk at all without feet, but go
we will while in the body, we muſt take our feet along
s. Even ſo our bodily ſenſes and imaginations attend
oſt ſpiritual actings; but they can no more help us to
n theſe ſpiritual paths, or help us to ſaving knowledge
ith, than our feet can help us to walk on the face of the
on the head of a cloud, or the top of a rainbow. Be-
d ſpirits differ more yet, than the different elements.
t gave us our being, gave us different bodily powers,
ing different elements; he gave us lungs to help us to
e in the air, and feet to help us to walk upon the earth,
ifferent powers for different purpoſes: And however
ient one may be to another in different reſpects, for
le, a man cannot walk without breath, yet his lungs
properly help his feet to walk on the earth, nor his
lp him to breathe in the air. And as little, yea far
n corporeal powers give any proper help to our intel-
l faculties, however ſubſervient in providence the one
the other, while ſoul and body are upite. But, if one
make incroachment upon the proper power and
ative of the other, the faculty incroached upon, had
d want its help as have it. A man can walk upon the
, as well without feet as with them, unleſs by ſome mi-
us and ſupernatural power he be helped to it. Thus
al powers are neceſſary for ſpiritual employments; to
corporeal powers can contribute no proper aſſiſtance.
r. Robe thinks I have this to prove, "That the natural
al *powers God hath* given to us as men, are not help-
ful, but we would know God much better if we wanted

that animates the body in man. And though the rational ſoul may be ſaid to hear, ſee, &c. by the body and its ſenſes; yet *ſeeing* is no act of the rational ſoul properly, if it be not a rational ſeeing; nor *hearing* a part of it, if it be not a rational hearing. Therefore bodily eyes and ears, though they be called *gifts of God*, as the God of nature and providence; yet they are no proper ordinances of God for helping us to the knowledge of him. When bodies are preſented to the eye, and ſounds are made in the ear, there is no man that hath eyes and ears, but will naturally ſee and hear them. But to confound this with the ordinances of reading or hearing the word, as they are rational actions and moral duties, is as abſurd as the confounding of the fancy of ſounds we hear, with the knowledge or faith of the truths we hear, though even rational hearing will not do without faith, Heb. iv. 2.

Mr. Robe ſays, "That what he had ſaid above, is the total amount of that impertinent jumble of ſcriptures Mr. Erſkine hath, p. 55, 56, 57." Anſwer. Whether the ſcriptures I there cited are jumbled impertinently, I leave to the judgment of the judicious, who may ſee my words at the end of the preface to this treatiſe. Only I think it is evident, one of them, ſcriptures does not contradict or croſs another; but the whole of my opponent's explications above amounts indeed to an unaccountable jumbling of things together as oppoſite to one another as fleſh and ſpirit, and as diſtinct as external and bodily organs, that help us to ſee, hear, taſte, ſmell, and handle external things, are diſtinct from internal and intellectual faculties, that help us to ſee and know things ſpiritual and divine.

But, ſays Mr. Robe, "I am afraid he won't get many, even Seceders, that will chuſe to put his concluſion to the trial;" that is, who will want their bodily ſenſes, in order to try if they ſhall know God better without them. This taunt upon the Seceders might be eaſily borne: But what if, ſtriking at them, he be found wickedly ſtrengthening the hands of an atheiſtical generation, and profanely ſtriking at religion itſelf, and its higheſt exerciſes, and ignorantly ſtabbing it under the fifth rib? For I muſt tell Mr. Robe, there are even among the Seceders that would heartily chuſe ſometimes to be out of the body, and all its ſenſes that God hath given to it, that they may know him better than they do; and who would chuſe, not only to be quite free of a body of ſin and death, but alſo of burdenſome bodies of clay too, *with all the* darkening glaſſes they now ſee him by, that *they may ſee* him face to face, and know as they are known, 1 *Cor. xiii. 12.* and that they may be like him, by ſeeing him

is, 1 John iii. 2. This was the exercise of the saints in scripture, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 3, 4. Phil. i. 21, 22, 23, and it hath been, and sometimes is the exercise of some of those whom Mr. Robe mocks as Seceders. They are not indeed so wicked (as the taunt imports) as to chuse to put out their own bodily eyes, that they may see God better with the eyes of their souls, which is one of the profane flights of that author's fancy and imagination; but they would chuse sometimes, that God himself would hasten, in his own time, to shut their eyes by death, that they may know him more perfectly and in a more immediate way, than now they can do, while these vails of flesh and sense interveen between him and them. So that Mr. Robe is here, under the mask of a poor witticism, though I hope unawares, sporting at one of the most eminent degrees of the saints spiritual exercises on earth. Indeed, they cannot well be supposed to make such a choice as this, who find, according to Mr. Robe's scheme, their own natural senses and imaginations so greatly helpful to the knowledge of God, that without them they can have nothing of it; and consequently whose natural sensations are the great part of their religion, and such a great help to it; and who, instead of knowing God by faith and supernatural illumination, boast so much of their knowledge of God by sense and feeling, fancy and imagination. I fear many of Mr. Robe's late converts have put his conclusion too much to the trial; and that, their root being rottenness, their blossom must go up as dust. May the Lord deliver them that have been ensnared and plunged into deep delusions, and have been carried away with fancies, imaginary ideas and strong imaginations, instead of saving faith and real religion.

SECT. XIV.

In the following paragraph, p. 63. I see nothing that will be worth my reader's while to have my answer to it. Though I be accused of tricks therein, for not quoting a page of Mr. Robe's letter, wherein he fancies I wronged him, it is enough he hath now quoted it himself. I grudge not his doing all the justice to himself he can. But the main thing he here accuses me of, is, because I had said that he cites Mr. Shepherd and me upon the subject of imaginary ideas, or the images of spiritual things represented to the fancy; whereas he, in answer to this, says, "He never understood imaginary ideas to be the images of spiritual things represented to the fancy; and therefore never cited us upon this subject." On this I must observe, that, though it may be very true that he says, yet he must certainly understand the images *of corporeal things* in the fancy representing spiritual

things, such as the subjects we were cited upon, namely, *hell*, which is a spiritual thing, as it consists in God's everlasting wrath, represented by the fancy to the mind in the image of *fire**, which is a corporeal thing; or the *human nature of Christ*, which, as it is the object of faith, is a *spiritual* thing represented by the image of a *human body* which is a corporeal thing, &c. Now Mr. Robe's bringing in any such corporeal things to be the object of faith, the object whereof cannot be any thing corporeal as such, but only spiritual and invisible, this made me to charge Mr. Robe's language with the absurdity of making spiritual things, that are objects of faith, to be the objects of fancy, and corporeal things, that are objects of fancy, to be the objects of faith; as I have shewed above, sect. 5. p. 163. This being the case then, there was no wrong done to Mr. Robe: For indeed spiritual things cannot be represented to our bodily senses and imagination any other way than by the images of bodily things. And this is the reason why I have said, that these images, or imaginary ideas, cannot properly be helpful to the knowledge of spiritual things; whatever occasion they may give to the understanding faculty, to deduce spiritual conclusions from them, or from any such figurative and metaphorical expressions. *Sense* and imagination helps only to know the outward matter of a metaphor; *reason* helps to know the rational and natural meaning of it; and *faith* helps to know the spiritual import of it. If reason and judgment shape it according to the image that sense or imagination forms of it, it will be sure to mistake and misunderstand it.

Since Mr. Robe acknowledges he never understood imaginary ideas to be the images of spiritual things represented to the fancy, and that our senses and imagination can only help us to see and form conceptions of corporeal things, it would seem strange, he will also have them greatly helpful to the knowledge of God, and spiritual things; which they can no otherwise be than as he explains, p. 10. as above I noticed; namely, by presenting images to the superior faculties; that is to say, the images of corporeal things are helpful to the understanding of spiritual things. This is the same with saying, that the image of a body is a help to know God, who is a Spirit, and the image of a man helpful to know the person of the God-man.

Upon this subject I may observe, that those creatures that have a *vegetative* life, and no more, like plants, they have no *sense*. These that have a *sensitive* life, and no more, like beasts, they have no *reason*. The se that have a *rational* life, and no more, they have no saving faith. But those rational creatures that have

* See *Maccovii regulæ theol.* p. 162. Ignis qui dicitur esse in inferno, non *erit materialis; sed* dicitur ita figurative, quia aget in diabolum; *corporeus autem ignis id* præstare nequit.

also *saving faith*, may be possessed of all the powers and qualifications forementioned at once; yet so as, however subordinate and subservient one of them may be to another, yet they cannot properly be helpful to one another without and beyond the sphere of their activity; that is, the life of *vegetation*, or growth like plants, cannot help him to see, or hear, or exercise any bodily *sense*. Again, the life of *sense*, or mere sensation, outward or inward, like that of beasts, cannot help him to *reason* or reflect upon things spiritual, or superior to the nature of bodies. And finally, the *rational* life is capable of this, yet cannot help to the spiritual life of faith, which lives upon things that are supernatural and supernatural, and which requires supernatural faculties, not by destroying the substance of the natural ones, but by such a supernatural renovation of them, as great, as if they were quite removed, by him who says, *Behold, I make all things new*, Rev. xxi. 5. and Isa. xliii. 19, 20. 21. *Behold, I will do a new thing*, &c. *The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls*, &c. *This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise*. And so it is said of the person that is a new creature, verse 7. *I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him*. Indeed, when ever a person is made a new man, by being *renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him*, Col. iii. 10. when he, being brought back to the knowledge of God, comes to know himself and the creatures in another manner than he did. He sees God in every creature, perhaps in every pile of grass upon the ground; he can see the power, wisdom and glory of God therein. His *senses* help him to see no more but the *matter*, his *reason* sometimes may help him to reflect upon the *author* of that matter; and only *faith* helps him to see *his God* and *Father*, and the glory of God in Christ, as not only the former of all things, but the author of the new creation as well as the old. Dr. Owen, on *the person of Christ*, p. 37. says, "The revelation and representation of God in Christ and the gospel, is received by *faith* alone; the revelation and representation of God in the works of creation and providence, is received by reason only, &c."

"The law of subserviency that God made to himself, whereby he makes one thing in providence introductory to another, is no part of his moral law given to us. The first thing that God teaches us in the moral law, is, to reduce us again to the knowledge, not of the creature first, and then of him; but first of himself, as our God in Christ, saying, *I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before me*. Why, what other gods can we have? Even the objects of sense, the creatures, and things that can be seen with the eye, or painted on the mind by imagination. *Therefore the next* word of God in that moral law is, *Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image*, &c. If this com-

mand forbid all *molten images* of God, then it prohibits alſo all *mental images* of him who is God, ſo as to make theſe the objects of worſhip, and conſequently all imaginary ideas of Chriſt as man; and enjoins us, ſeeing he is man, to know, worſhip and believe in him as *God-man*, or God in our nature, not *as man*, for thus he is not God, and hence is not to be worſhipped in that reſpect. If the imaginary idea be here brought in, as a help to the knowledge of God, it is brought in contrary to the moral law; of which that foreſaid law of ſubſerviency that God hath made to himſelf, is, no part. Mental images of Chriſt then are no better than molten images, *profitable for nothing*, Iſa. xliv. 10. Though *made after the figure of a man, according the beauty of a man*, verſe 13. yet it may be ſo of thoſe that fall down to it, and worſhip it, as verſe 18. *They have not known nor underſtood; for God hath ſhut* [or, as in the margin, *daubed*] *their eyes that they cannot ſee: and their heart that they cannot underſtand.* Yea, even to ſuch a mental idolater it may be ſaid alſo, as verſe 20. *He feedeth of aſhes: a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lie in the right hand?* Alas! there is nothing more evident, than that there is nothing but a lie in the *right hand of all* our natural imaginations of God in the perſon of our Immanuel, who can be ſeen by no eye but that of faith; and of whom mens' natural imaginations are *teachers of lies*, and *gravers of an abomination* equal to theirs that *fell down to the ſtock of a tree*, Iſa. xliv. 19.

The ſum of Mr. Robe's three aſſertions, p. 60, 61. of his letter, together with his three things he makes neceſſary to the right knowledge of Chriſt, p. 31. and 54. comes to this, That we can have no knowledge of God nor of Chriſt, but what comes by the neceſſary adjutancy and previous helpfulneſs of our outward ſenſes and inward imaginations, terminating upon ſome corporeal object, ſome viſible creature; no knowledge of God till firſt our ſenſes and imaginations view ſome material object in this viſible world, that is, ſome creature; no knowledge of Chriſt, the God-man, in his perſon, till firſt we have an imaginary idea of him as man, that is, a creature; and hence, no knowledge either of God or Chriſt, but by ſome creature, that can be ſeen with the eye, or viewed by the fancy: And conſequently, that our ſenſes and fancies viewing the creatures, are the firſt neceſſary and natural means and helps to all the knowledge, whether natural or ſaving, which we have of God; that is, the creatures are the firſt teachers, and our ſenſes and imaginations the firſt powers and faculties helping to receive the inſtruction, *or to convey* the knowledge of God or Chriſt to the underſtanding; *or*, which is all one, that the underſtanding by the help *of theſe ſenſes* and imaginations obtain that knowledge.

In oppoſition to this doctrine, I ſhall here further offer my thoughts in the following diſcourſe upon this momentous ſubject:

Whatever ſecondary views of God, or knowledge of him, we may have by means of the creatures, or works of creation, looked at rationally; yet I am far from thinking that the firſt or primary knowledge we have of God, whether by nature or by grace, can be by the creatures, as the firſt or leading means thereof, or helps thereunto, in a proper ſenſe.

It may be fit, that, in the entry on this diſcourſe, I explain how far the ſenſes are uſeful and neceſſary to the knowing of things within their ſphere. And here I may in ſome particulars copy after the learned Maſtricht, in his *Gangræna, cap.* 29. *De hominis ſenſibus*; who there ſays, he copies much after the learned De Vries. Where we find what the orthodox doctors of divinity and philoſophy had in controverſy with the Carteſian philoſophers; who, to eſtabliſh the poſition they laid down, relating to their innate ideas of all things, and aſſerting the ſenſes to be ſo deceitful and fallacious, as not at all to be truſted, therefore diſcarded them as of no uſe for judging or diſcerning, for confirming or evidencing the truth or falſhood of any thing; and conſequently all ocular demonſtrations and ſenſible proofs were to be rejected, and only the intellect attending to innate ideas to be regarded. This is that extreme, tending to Scepticiſm on the one hand, which true philoſophy and right reaſon will never admit; no more than it will allow groſs Epicuriſm on the other; which refers all judgment of what is true or falſe to the ſenſes, as if theſe could never deceive us, but were to be the very rule of judging, as things appeared to them: inſomuch that the favourers of this opinion have not ſcrupled to aſſert ſuch a childiſh and ruſtic error as this, That the ſun, moon or ſtars were no bigger in themſelves, than they appeared to the bodily eye. Therefore ſound philoſophers have embraced the middle, or *medium* between theſe extremes, as the ſafeſt, rendering to the underſtanding what properly belongs to it, namely, its power of judging in matters intelligible; and to the ſenſes, guided by reaſon, what belongs to them, in matters that are ſenſible; and directing, that theſe different faculties confine themſelves within the ſphere of their own proper objects, and that the ſenſes meddle not with things that are called *mere-ly intelligible*; becauſe it is acknowledged, there are ſome things which directly, and by themſelves, do no way affect the ſenſes, (or very inſenſibly and ſlighty;) and which therefore are not to be meaſured ſimply by the immediate perception of the ſenſes. Hence they may be reckoned blind, that can ſee no other thing by their underſtanding, than what they have ſeen or can ſee with their eyes. *And hence* ſome have fallen into great hereſy, ſays

on *,—*cum ceratis ſenſuum alis ad divina evolare contenderent: When with ſenſes waxed wings they would ſtrive to flee toward things ſpiritual and divine.* Which yet is not underſtood, as if enſation were quite uſeleſs in relation to things ſpiritual and divine: Though theſe cannot be proper objects of ſenſe; yet in ſo far as ſenſible things are ſet before us in ſcripture, to excite our minds to the contemplation of theſe ſpiritual things, that are repreſented thereby; in this reſpect, the ſenſes are many ways profitable and neceſſary, not as helps to know and diſcern ſpiritual things, which is impoſſible; but as helps to diſcern theſe ſenſible things that directly pertain to ſenſe, that, through them the rational ſoul may be ſtirred up, and take occaſion to learn the ſpiritual leſſons deſigned thereby: For theſe ſenſible things and ſigns will be quite unprofitable, if people reſt in the ſimple perception thereof by their bodily ſenſes. In order, then, to keep the middle path between the aforeſaid extremes, the learned allow and aſſert,

1. That, for a foundation of all common knowledge, and of arts and ſciences among men, there are ſome firſt principles of truth in us, and as it were connatural to us; ſuch as, That the ſame thing cannot be and not be at the ſame time: That two and two make four: That there is ſuch a thing as natural body, motion, place, time, &c. But they reject the Carteſian ideas, as being no ſuch principles, but mere figments.

2. That the ſenſes in men are not ſo fallacious and deceitful, but that, under the conduct of reaſon and judgment, they are to be admitted as judges of the truth and certainty of ſenſible things; and their teſtimony is not to be rejected in theſe matters that are their proper objects, when preſented duly, without the intervention of ſome other ſenſible objects or *medium*. (In which caſe, it is men's judgments rather that deceive them, than their ſenſes: as if a clown ſhould look to the ſun, and judge it no bigger than his bonnet, it is not his ſight that deceives him, but his judgment, not conſidering the diſtance, or intervening *medium*.) They admit that the ſenſes apprehend all things that are, either *in themſelves*, or in regard of their effects, *apparent* and *ſenſible*. In this reſpect, *nothing is* ſaid to be *in the underſtanding that is not firſt in the ſenſe*. (Which holds, I ſuppoſe, with reference to the acquired knowledge of things by ſenſible means and demonſtrations, but not with reference to that innate knowledge in the rational ſoul, which I conceive to be imported in Rom. i. 18. and ii. 11. and even in ſome of theſe firſt principles of truth juſt now mentioned; nor with reference to theſe objects that are purely ſpiritual and merely *intelligible*.) Yet hence,

3. *They* own, that to caſt the teſtimony of the ſenſes in matters *that are* within their ſphere, would be to caſt all the ma-

* Verulamius de augm. ſcient. lib 1.

ous testimonies given in scripture for the confirmation of the
h, by sensible evidences and ocular demonstrations: As when
are called to lift up our eyes and look to the visible crea-
, and thence gather proofs of the invisible power and being
God, Psalm xix. 1, 2. Rom. i. 20. Acts xvii. 17. Hence sen-
s signs and seals in the sacraments are prescribed for the con-
nation of our faith, at which it is said, in the Lord's sup-
, *Take ye, eat ye; this is my body.* Thus the faith of the
bting disciple was roused and confirmed by that which was
object, not of faith, but of sense, when he was allowed to
his hand into Christ's side, &c. And thus the apostles cer-
their hearers of the truth, and provoke their faith, by
uments drawn from their senses, 1 John i. 1. namely, by
it they had *heard with their ears, seen with their eyes, and*
dled with their hands. Thus many sensible things that can-
, as such, be objects of faith, but of sense; yet may be oc-
ons, arguments and confirmations of faith: And are they
then great helps to faith, may one say? I answer, not pro-
ly, but an improper and figurative sense; even as light may
laid to help a man to see things, but not properly: For,
ugh light discovers objects, it cannot help a man to see them;
belongs properly to the eye. Sensible things are not pro-
lyhelps to faith. Sense properly helps to look at these visible
l sensible glasses; and faith, or spiritual understanding, helps
perly to look through these glasses to the spiritual and in-
ble objects exhibit therein: Even as the eye of sense helps
look to the visible heavens, and the eye of reason to look
the invisible God therein.

They own, that such is the close connection and conjunction
wixt soul and body, and betwixt the intellective acts of the one,
l the sensitive act of the other, that the rational soul can scarce
think of any thing, unless the forming of the conception be oc-
ioned by some sensation. Hence proceeds our natural readi-
s and facility in perceiving corporeal things, rather than spi-
ual. And hence Cartesius himself says, *That our mind does with greatest difficulty attend to those things that are neither present the sense nor imagination, but merely to the understanding.*

So far do the orthodox doctors allow in these matters. But,
ile they shew that men's senses are to be credited, and their
timony not to be distrusted, they at the same time affirm, they
not helps or leaders to any knowledge, but that which relates
their proper objects, to wit, sensible things. And, when they
ak of the testimony of the senses, they do not mean *naked sen-*
and perceptions, (which would indeed be brutish judges); but
ey mean (as I told above, chap. I.) *the prudent use* of the senses,
sulting from the rational soul; of which brutes are destitute,
ugh they have both sense and perception; which is also prove

againſt the Carteſians, (*Gangr. cap. 30.*). Thus it is not th
ſes and imagination that are the firſt and leading helps ev
any natural knowledge in men, whether *innate* or *acquired*.
former, called *innate*, is owing to the natural make of th
tional ſoul; the latter, called *acquired*, is owing to reaſon
ciſed, or to the ſenſes guided by reaſon and judgment, mak
prudent uſe and improvement of objects preſented to the ſen

Mr. Robe ſeems to me ſometimes as if he were daſhing hi
againſt one, and ſometimes againſt another of theſe oppoſite
of Scepticiſm and Epicuriſm unawares, while, on the one
his imaginary ideas ſeems to be ſib to the Carteſian innate i
images, notions and ſpecies of all things, which their learne
tagoniſts ſhew to be the original of Scepticiſm: And yet, o
other hand, his making our natural ſenſes the great and le
helps to ſpiritual knowledge, ſeems to border upon Epicu
I own he ſeems not to have any of theſe extremes directly i
view; perhaps he will hate to be reckoned upon any one of
ſides: But I ſpeak of the tendency of ſome of his words, t
apprehenſion. If by his imaginary ideas there ſeems to be
countenance given to the Carteſian figments about innate
of all things, the danger of this extreme is laid open by the
ſaid writers, as laying the foundation for Scepticiſm, or r
for Atheiſm. It is well known, (ſay they,) how the Scept
after they began to diſtruſt all things perceived by the ſenſes
to doubt of every thing; and ſo made the very truth, reality
exiſtence of bodies to be dubious and uncertain to themſe
as ſuppoſing they had no ſenſes, and that bodies were *mere*
meras.

The direct reverſe of this is, the extreme of the Epicure
who made bodies, atoms, ſpace, gravity, the principles all th
and bodily ſenſes their only rule of judging and diſcer
truths †. Both theſe atheiſtical extremes ſeem to ſtrike dir
againſt God, our maker, *by whom all things were created, tha
in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible*, Col. i.
The Sceptic extreme ſeems to doubt of, and deny all things
ble, and the Epicurean to deny all things *inviſible*; and ſo t

* On the ſide of the Sceptics wrote Parmenides thus:
Nec tibi communis ſenſus perſuadeat unquam
Quicquam, ut fallaces oculi, aut judicet auris,
Aut lingua: at ratio dirimat diſcrimina rerum.

† In behalf of the Epicureans wrote Lucretius thus:
Quid referemus enim, quid nobis certius ipſis
Senſibus eſſe queat, quo vera & falſa notentur?
Ex ſenſu namque omnia quæ ſunt credita pendent:
Cui niſi prima fides recte fundata valebit,
Haud erit occultis de rebus quo referentes
Confirmare animos quicquam ratione queamus.

erous teſtimonies given in ſcripture for the confirmation of the ruth, by ſenſible evidences and ocular demonſtrations: As when ve are called to lift up our eyes and look to the viſible creation, and thence gather proofs of the inviſible power and being of God, Pſalm xix. 1, 2. Rom. i. 20. Acts xvii. 17. Hence ſenſible ſigns and ſeals in the ſacraments are preſcribed for the confirmation of our faith, at which it is ſaid, in the Lord's ſupper, *Take ye, eat ye; this is my body.* Thus the faith of the doubting diſciple was rouſed and confirmed by that which was he object, not of faith, but of ſenſe, when he was allowed to ut his hand into Chriſt's ſide, &c. And thus the apoſtles cerify their hearers of the truth, and provoke their faith, by rguments drawn from their ſenſes, 1 John i. 1. namely, by hat they had *heard with their ears, ſeen with their eyes, and andled with their hands.* Thus many ſenſible things that cant, as ſuch, be objects of faith, but of ſenſe; yet may be occaſions, arguments and confirmations of faith: And are they ot then great helps to faith, may one ſay? I anſwer, not properly, but an improper and figurative ſenſe; even as light may be ſaid to help a man to ſee things, but not properly: For, though light diſcovers objects, it cannot help a man to ſee them; is belongs properly to the eye. Senſible things are not properly helps to faith. Senſe properly helps to look at theſe viſible nd ſenſible glaſſes; and faith, or ſpiritual underſtanding, helps roperly to look through theſe glaſſes to the ſpiritual and inviſible objects exhibit therein: Even as the eye of ſenſe helps o look to the viſible heavens, and the eye of reaſon to look o the inviſible God therein.

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ed Atheists among them, such as Dionysius, Diagoras, and otl
mock their solemn worship of these deities, and when they
decided by intelligent men, while yet the order of the world se
to tell them there was really a God, though these were n
those who had philosophical wits, such as Democritus and Ep
rus, set themselves to work, to see if they could solve the ph
mena of nature without a Deity; and therefore asserted the o
of the universe to be only by a fortuitous concourse of infinit
tle particles. But herein they befooled themselves and their
dy followers, who were glad to be rid of these anxities of m
which the thoughts of a Deity and an immortal soul did
within them. And though Lucretius (*de rerum nat. l.*) b
of his master, That, when men's minds were sunk under the
den of religion, Epicurus was the first brave giant who durs
counter the gods, and overthrow them in open field, (thoug
greatest victory would have been to become like the beasts
perish;) yet Cotta in Tully (*de natura deor. l.* . *c.* 86.) insi
us quite otherwise, That Epicurus was so far from gaining
beloved ease and pleasure by his sentiments, that never s
school-boy more afraid of a rod, nor did any enemy more d
a conqueror, than Epicurus did the thoughts of a God and d
Nay, [says that author] *did I ever see any fear so much*
things he had alleaged were not to be feared (mortem dico &
namely, *God and death.* And Epicurus himself, after all his p
knew it was to no purpose to endeavour to root out the beli
a Deity out of the world; and therefore owned, *that nature*
had stamped a notion of God upon the minds of men. Whic
more than some modern philosophers grant.

The Cartesian writers, that move to the other extreme, in d
ing our natural senses their proper place in judging of any t
from sensible evidences, seem to make all knowledge depend
their *ideas*, as the former do upon their *senses*, and both of
upon themselves; forgetting much the God that made them,
in whom we live, and move, and have our being; as the ap
Paul cites Aratus, one of the Greek poets, saying. And to
purpose said Ovid, *Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo*
is true, the ideal doctrine of the Cartesians, seems sometim
confound their innate ideas with innate knowledge (as M.
his ideas, even imaginary, with knowledge;) as if these were
same. But their learned opposers allow the latter, viz. in
knowledge, but deny the former, viz. innate ideas. Yet upon
confounding of these two some of their arguments proceed;
as those of Claubergius mentioned by Mastrich.*. *If*
knowledge [says he] *arise from the senses, then it is a wonder*
they are not most wise who are most led always by their senses:

* Cartesian, p. 487.

ness, which excel men in their ſenſitive faculties, do not excel them in wiſdom and knowledge; and that thoſe who have no bodily ſenſes, as God and angels, ſhould yet have moſt wiſdom and knowledge, &c. Theſe arguments or objections, to which anſwers are given, *(ubi ſupra,)* ſeem, in my opinion, to ariſe from their confounding natural *innate knowledge*, which is allowed to be in men, with their *innate ideas*, which are denied: For I think theſe arguments prove the former, but not the latter; nor do they prove that the ſenſes are not neceſſary to the knowledge of ſenſible things as ſuch, or that they would be better known, merely by the underſtanding attending to innate ideas of them; which would be a drawing away the mind from the knowledge of theſe things as they are *in themſelves ſenſible* things, and ſubſtituting in the room thereof mere imaginary knowledge forged in the brain.

But it is certain, that human knowledge *acquired* by the rational view of ſenſible objects, and thus by the natural ſenſes, differs greatly, not only from that knowledge which God and angels have, who want bodily ſenſes; but alſo from that ſenſe and perception of brutes, that want rational ſoule, and conſequently want that innate knowledge and natural light that men have. Therefore, though I reject the Carteſian hypotheſis relating to their *innate ideas* of God, and of all things; yet I allow the *innate knowledge* of God, and of all things elſe, according to the meaſure and degree of that knowledge we have of him, and from him, as the root and original of all *acquired* knowledge: For, as Charnock ſays, vol. II. p. 481. "The knowledge of God by nature and creatures is neceſſary as a foundation for higher apprehenſions, and for turning to God. Man without it would be wholly bruiſh, and incapable of inſtructions in chriſtianity, as an ox or a ſheep: And though man deſerved by ſin to be deprived of this natural knowledge, yet God kept it up as a ſtock on which in time he ingraft other principles in the diſcoveries of Chriſt." And therefore, though theſe and the like Carteſian arguments above mentioned, do not at all, in my opinion, prove the main point for which they are produced, to wit, that there muſt be innate ideas, that is, images, repreſentations, intelligible ſpecies of all things, in the mind; which ſeems to be nothing but chimerical notions, that abuſe the reaſon much more than the outward ſenſes can be ſuppoſed to do: Yet I judge theſe ſame arguments of theirs, ſerve ſtrongly to prove the point which I have in hand at preſent, namely, to demonſtrate the neceſſity of that previous natural innate knowledge in all men which I ſpeak of; and to ſhew, that our knowledge of God and of the creatures, does not ariſe from our ſenſes and imaginations; which would do us no ſervice this way, if previous thereunto there were no innate knowledge and *natural light given us of God*, which is ready, according as he has

prepared it, like an inward ſpark, to catch the outward fla
ſenſible objects preſented to it.

God would not be knowable by the creatures, if there wer
ſome dark remains and ſparkles of that natural light and k
ledge which God gave at firſt to Adam: So that ſome knowl
of God in himſelf muſt be previous to any knowledge w
have of him by the creature; becauſe, as the creatures ha
capacity of knowing God themſelves, and cannot tell us what
know nothing of; ſo we could not know God by them, th
they have ſome footſteps of their divine Author upon them, i
had nothing of the knowledge of God without them. As a
cannot know his own face by the help of a glaſs, or by lookin
himſelf or his image therein, if he had no previous knowled
himſelf; no more could we know any thing of God by loo
through the glaſs of the creature to ſee therein his power,
dom, and other perfections, if we had not an intellectual ſo
and rational ſoul, with ſuch an internal underſtanding by n
ral light, as makes us know him again, when we ſee him r
ſented to us in ſuch a glaſs.

Adam certainly knew God, though not in his eſſence, y
himſelf, abſtract from the creature, and in ſuch a way as the
ture could not make him known. He knew God in his rel
being, as his God and friend; otherwiſe he would never hav
away from him with ſhame, when the friendſhip was broke
his ſin. He knew God before ever he knew the creatures;
he was created after God's image, in knowledge, righteouſ
and holineſs, with dominion over the creatures. He knew
in theſe things of God which the creatures could not teach
namely, the mind and will of God as to his duty; for he ha
perfect knowledge of the law of God, which was written on
mind, and concreated with him. God impreſſed it upon his
and made him a law to himſelf; as the remains of it among
Heathen do teſtify, Rom. ii. 14, 15. So that what knowledg
God Adam had, he had it from God himſelf originally; not f
the creature; whatever additional views he had of God, by
templating the works of creation. And thus all the ſaving kn
ledge of God in thoſe that are renewed in the ſpirit of their m
is from God himſelf, Eph. iv. 23. For *the new man is rene
in knowledge, after the image of him that created him*, Col. iii
*The God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhines
their heart, to give them the light of the knowledge of his glory i
face of Jeſus Chriſt*. This light of knowledge was eminentl
man at his firſt creation; though now his light is darkneſs, and e
creature a kind of teacher, that reads a lecture concerning
his being, wiſdom, power and goodneſs. Man the maſter of
the creatures is become a ſcholar to all the creatures. Yet as
creatures were not at firſt the firſt teachers, ſo neither are

now. If man had no knowledge of God *without them*, he could have no knowledge of God *by them*, Rom. i. 19.

Maccovius and Arnold (*Diſtinct.* p. 39 ſay, The knowledge of God is either natural or revealed. For the former they cite Rom. i 20. for the latter John i. 18. The natural knowledge of God [ſay they] is that which puts forth itſelf of its own accord in adult perſons of a ſound mind, ſo as, though none teach them, they are perſuaded that there is a Divine Being, moſt wiſe and powerful, that made and governs the world, and the things that are in it; and that this great Being ſhould be religiouſly worſhipped: But that we are to know, natural knowledge is not of nature, as ſeeing, hearing, for example are, though Vorſtius impertinently talks ſo; but that, when one is come to the uſe and exerciſe of reaſon, though he has no teacher, this knowledge ariſes from innate principles.

Maſtricht, in his forecited book, intitled, *Novitatum Carteſianarum gangræna*, p. 204 ſhewing that God is not known by ideas, images, repreſentations, but by his own eſſence co-exiſtent with our ſouls, ſpeaks thus: "As it is ſaid, Acts xvii. 27, 28. *That they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, though he is not far from every one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being*; you ſee that we ſeek God, (to wit: by thinking, knowing) as it were by *feeling*, as one who is not far from every one of us. If God therefore is thus intimately preſent by his own eſſence, with our underſtanding, to what purpoſe are ideas? To what purpoſe images of a thing preſent? Nor does this imply any abſurdity; ſince God is the firſt thing knowable, even as light is the firſt thing viſible: And therefore as light needs no ſpecies of light by which it ſhould be ſeen, ſince by it all things are ſeen; ſo truly there is no need of any idea, ſpecies, image or repreſentation of God in us, whereby we may ſee him in our mind, ſince *ipſum videamus per ſeipſum*, we ſee him by himſelf. If this does not ſuffice, pray tell, what do we think, what do we know, when we think of God, or know the Divine Being? Is it not that, than which nothing can be known more or better? From which it is plain all things elſe ſtand infinitely diſtant Is it not ſomewhat that is eternal, omnipotent, omniſcient, immutable? But this very thing is God, or the Divine Being. And to ſuppoſe, that any created being ſhould offer or preſent to us a ſimilar repreſentation, in order to give us the thought and knowledge of him, is moſt horrid and abſurd.

As Adam knew all the creatures, and gave them names *ſuited to their nature*; ſo what makes us know different crea-

tures in some measure according to their kind, when we see them, but some remains of nature's light and knowledge that was in Adam, though now miserable defaced? But the knowledge of God himself and in himself was the first that Adam had; and the knowledge of God by the creature was but secondary: For the knowledge he had of the creatures, was rooted and graffed in the knowledge he had of God; which made him know them as they were the creatures of the God, whom he knew by the innate knowledge of God in which he was created perfect. Though this image of God be totall defaced since the fall, as to any saving effect; yet such small spunks and sparkles of natural light remain, that our senses and imagination looking some time to the creature may occasion the dead habit of natural knowledge, or the dormant seeds of truth, in those *who hold the truth in unrighteousness*, Rom. i. 18. To rise and rouse themselves through the help of their rational and intellectual faculties to reflect upon the Author of the creation they behold. But this God who is the centre of truth they could no ways know, if the dormant seed of truth was not previously sown. If man had never been made after the image of God in knowledge, he could never have known God by any outward means whatsoever no more than other animals do, or than he himself in some cases does, notwithstanding his senses and imagination. For a man may have these, and yet be delirious, distracted and the like, and so destitute of the exercise of reason. Yea a man may be made like Nebuchadnezzar, to have the heart of a beast, and so be wholly destitute of reason, as he was till *his understanding returned to him*. Hence there are some cases wherein the senses and imagination viewing their objects, yet cannot so much as be the occasion of the knowledge of God; far less are they at any time proper helps to it. And however the truth of *what* God is be utterly lost by fallen man; yet, I say, if there were no dark remains of this truth of the Divine Being, *that* there is a God of glorious perfections, and if there were no such innate knowledge, without the creature, or previous dormant seeds thereof; then it were impossible for the visible creation to awaken this seed, or to infuse and create this knowledge of God, by their help and assistance: No visible creature could ever give him any eye to look through it, to its invisible Author; nor be any way helpful properly to that knowledge of God, which he behoved *to* have the latent image of in his nature, before ever the *creature* could give him occasion to exert that rational pow-

er of reflecting on the Divine Original and Author of that creation which he ſees*.

We know all things to be what in a true light we ſee them to be, becauſe we had that knowledge of them by nature, before ever we ſaw them; otherwiſe we could not know them to be what they are, by our ſeeing them. Even as Adam (as I ſaid) could not know the creatures to give them their names, ſuited to their nature, unleſs he had got that knowledge from the God of nature given to him before ever he ſaw them; thus it is with us: Though we have loſt ſuch a knowledge of God, as thereby to know the creatures, and ſuch a knowledge of the creatures, as to give them all their names according to their natures; yet ſo much of this knowledge remains, that whenever we ſee them, then we know them, in ſome reſpects to be what they are, and that this, or ſuch a creature is diſtinct from ſuch an other, becauſe we had this knowledge before. The mere ſight of things cannot give us ſo much knowledge as to diſtinguiſh between the ſtones on the earth, and the ſtars in heaven; both which beaſts may ſee, as well as men. Our knowledge of things viſible in their different nature and kind, is previous to our ſeeing of them: though the ſight of them gives occaſion to the ſleeping faculty of knowledge we had before, to awaken and exert itſelf, and to know the compaſs and extent of our own knowledge, whenever objects are preſented to it; which whenever they appear, then we know them to be what our ſenſes ſee them to be: And this we had before we ſaw them; otherwiſe neither theſe creatures, nor our ſight of them, could ever have given us that knowledge we have of them.

I would not here be underſtood, as if I adopted theſe Platonic hypotheſes, which ſuppoſe the *ſpecies* of things comprehended in the mind, called by them *ideas*, are divinely ingenerate in us; as if whatſoever in this life learned more perfectly, were but a certain mere remembrance of, or calling to mind what was once in the mind before, (Maſtricht, *Exerc. p.* 208) even as they ſpeak alſo of an intelligible

* Sound doctrine teaches to this purpoſe in ſeveral tracts of divinity. The words of one of them in Latin are, "Ex natura vero naturata, hoc eſt, ex τῶν πάντων ſtructura, cognoſcitur Deus; quatenus mundus manifeſtat eum qui fecit mundum, & potentia cognoſcendi Deum naturaliter hominibus inſita eſt. Rom. ii. 14. ait Paulus, *opus legis ſcriptum eſt in cordibus eorum*: nam ubi aliqua legis divinæ eſt cognitio, & quidem cognitio naturalis, ibi aliqua etiam eſt cognitio Dei tanquam Legiſlatoris; juxta regulam, Cognito uno relatorum, cognoſcitur & alterum. Puta, ſi non per omnia, ſaltem quoad quæſtionem, *quid ſit*: atqui, apoſtolo teſte, in *Ethnicis eſt aliqua naturalis* legis divinæ cognitio. Ergo, & in iiſdem eſt *aliqua naturalis Dei*, Legiſlatoris, cognitio." De Deo trin-uno, p. 3.

ſpecies or idea of God; on which, the ſame author ſays, the Papiſts build their religious worſhip of images, (p 215.) But I underſtand ſuch an image or knowledge of the creature as is conſequential upon, and ſome way connected with the natural innate knowledge of God; which I ſhall a little further explain by and by. For our right knowledge of ourſelves, and of all other creatures of God, bears ſome proportion to the knowledge we have of God himſelf; *in whoſe light we ſee light*, and by the knowledge of whom we know all things elſe. And according to the meaſure and rectitude of our knowledge of him, ſuch is the meaſure and rectitude of our knowledge of the true nature, uſe and end of his creatures. This knowledge I ſuppoſe to ly ſeminally in, and to be concreated with the rational faculty of underſtanding. Though I don't confound, but diſtinguiſh between the faculty of knowing things, and the actual knowledge of them; yet, as there can be no act, where there is no habit, principle or power of acting; ſo there can be no actual knowledge of any thing, where there is not a capacity for knowing: Which capacity comprehends ſeminally or radically that knowledge I ſpeak of at preſent; and which I call an image, only in ſo far as it is a branch of the ſmall remains of that natural image of God after which he created man at firſt. Our ſenſes, therefore, and imaginations terminating upon corporeal objects, can help us to no knowledge that we had not before in the reſpect above mentioned. They only give occaſion to us to know what we ſome way knew before, or to dilate and extend the previous knowledge of ſenſible objects we had, to new preſented objects of that ſort. The ſight of the object itſelf, does not help the faculty of ſeeing.

The image of any thing abſent doth not help the imaginative faculty, or power of imagination; it is only the object thereof, and does not help the ſubject: As little doth the ſight of any object help the knowledge of that object; it is only the occaſion of knowing it. Thus the ſun riſing and ſhining does not help any man to ſee; only it diſcovers itſelf and other things alſo to the ſenſe of ſeeing, and ſo gives occaſion to the ſubject ſeeing, to take up the object ſeen. Senſe and imagination can give a man no more ſubjective knowledge than what he had before. However reaſon may improve upon occaſion of the new objects of ſenſe preſented; yet our ſenſes and imagination, in and of themſelves, conſidered abſtractly *from* reaſon, can add no more help, and give no more light or *knowledge*, than it can do in brute beaſts. God not only as *the God of nature* has given the light of reaſon, but as the God

of grace hath given the light of revelation. All partake of the former, as ſome do of the latter. Dr. Arrowſmith, cited before, on John i. 9. ſays, "Light is twofold, natural and ſupernatural. Natural light is either the light of the ſun, the light of reaſon, or the light of conſcience. Supernatural is either the light of the word, the light of grace, or the light of glory." To bring in fancy or imagination as a proper help to any of theſe, is to put out the light, and to put darkneſs for light. As we could get no manner of help by the ſun to ſee the creatures about us, if we were blind and wanted eyes; ſo we could get no manner of help by the ſight of the creatures to the knowledge of God or ſpiritual things, if we wanted reaſon; by the help of which only we can draw concluſions, ſuch as that, Pſal. xciv. 9. That, if we can ſee and hear, much more than God who formed the eye, and planted the ear. Reaſon only can draw inferences or conſequences from things propoſed to it, for the furtherance of light and knowledge. Our ſenſes and imagination can preſent nothing to the underſtanding but corporeal objects; which if the underſtanding had no manner of knowledge of before, it could have no knowledge thereof after they are preſented. If the God of nature had not given this univerſal knowledge of viſible things, preſent or abſent, our ſight of them when preſent, or fancy of them when abſent, could never help us to know them; becauſe they have no knowledge of themſelves to convey; they are only the objects of knowledge of ſuch as God hath already given that knowledge unto. God, who gave us that knowledge *virtually* and *potentially* before ever the objects were preſented, he, by preſenting them, gives occaſion to exert that faculty and power, ſo as we know them *formally* and *actually*; yet ſo as theſe occaſions give no help to the faculty of knowing. Yet, if any pleaſe to ſay, that ſenſe and imagination help us to know things viſible and corporeal, when by *help* they underſtand only *occaſion*, as Maſtricht ſays, *(Occaſione ſenſuum fere cognoſcimus,) By the ſenſes as occaſions we almoſt know.* I would not diſpute about words with them, providing they do not aſcribe knowledge itſelf, even of corporeal things, to the things known, which are but the objects of that knowledge; but can give no more help to knowledge itſelf, than the riſing of the ſun can give a man's eyes, and help him to ſee it.

We cannot have the image of any thing in our mind *actually* by ſeeing it, unleſs we have the image of it *virtually* and *radically* before we ſee it. This I ſuppoſe will hold both in *nature and grace.*

1. We could have no knowledge of God by the creature, if we had nothing of the dark remains of the image of God by nature, and the light thereof, which God hath given to mankind, Rom i 19 and ii. 14. By the image of God here I again aſſert that I do not underſtand any thing ſimilar to the Platonic or Carteſian ideas, images, repreſentations; or what they call intelligible ſpecies; as if in the mind of man there were ſome kind of a figure or picture of God, ſo as the knowledge of God might conſiſt in the knowledge of the mind, or of that idea or image of him therein: Which, as the learned Maſtricht ſays, *is not to have God in the underſtanding, but an idea of God, (Gangr. p. 208.)* Nor is it the knowledge of God, but the knowledge of what they call an idea or image of him in the mind; which they ſeem to make the ſame with God himſelf, as to his vicarious and repreſentative Being; and conſequently is infinite: Which is vaſtly abſurd, as the ſame author more largely ſhews. But as the image of God is ſaid in ſcripture to conſiſt in knowledge, righteouſneſs and holineſs, &c. Eph. iv. 24 Col. iii. 10. ſo, by the image of God, I here mean that part of it which conſiſts in the knowledge of God, and particularly that knowledge of God which is natural, in contradiſtinction from gracious and ſaving knowledge; and that natural knowledge of God which is *innate*, and imprinted on the minds of all men, which, as Maſtricht ſays, ariſes from the *very Being of God co-exiſtent with the underſtanding*, in contradiſtinction from that natural knowledge of God which is called *acquired* by the contemplation of the creatures in a diſcurſive rational way of arguing from the effect to the cauſe, &c. the foreſaid natural and innate knowledge of God, is what many, I ſuppoſe, underſtand when they ſpeak of an idea of God, it having become a faſhionable way of ſpeaking. In this caſe I quarrel none about different words, when there is no different meaning. However, I ſay as above, we could have no knowledge of God by the creature, if we had nothing of the dark remains of the image of God, or of that *innate* knowledge of him by nature, and the light thereof, which God hath given to men, prior to any view they can have of him in the creature.

2. We can have no ſaving knowledge of God in Chriſt, till God reſtore his image, by *renewing us in the ſpirit of our minds, and in knowledge, after the image of him that created us.* If God ſhould manifeſt himſelf to us, before we have his image *reſtored*, we could not know him: He muſt firſt *give us an underſtanding to know himſelf*. 1 John v. 20. We know him when *he manifeſts* himſelf by the image of him that he previouſly *gave, by ſhining into our hearts*, to give us the light of the knowledge

of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. Christ is revealed *objectively* to many, that yet do not know him; because they have not his image in their hearts: Christ not being formed in them, and they not being renewed in the spirit of their mind, but perhaps having only an imaginary idea of him as man in their head, the *god of this world hath blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* But where once his image is formed in the *understanding* by saving illumination, and in the *heart* by regeneration, then, whenever this glorious object is anew presented in the glass of the word, they know him by the image of him that was previously formed in them by his word and Spirit, so far as to lead them to, and capacitate them for seeing and knowing him in that glass. Not by any imaginary idea, but by virtue of the *new creation in Christ Jesus*, bearing his image that created us, we become capable to see and know again what he revealed in his word before, and to know more and more of it, or to grow in knowledge according as that seed of knowledge sown in the mind is watered with new influences of light, or renewed discoveries of the glory of God in the word; not by any view or knowledge first of the creatures. Charnock, vol. II. p. 438. says, "Christ never directed men to the knowledge of any thing but God. He never took flesh, nor laid it down, to make us philosophers.—He was a Prophet to manifest the name of God, not the nature of the creatures.—Had these been necessary means, the scriptures had been full of natural demonstrations; it had been a book of nature, instead of a book of grace.—[And speaking of the creature] it can never of itself help us to the knowledge of divine things;—it hurts and hinders men from the saving knowledge of God and Christ.—The intent poring upon red hot iron, or other metals, blinds the eye, and hinders it from seeing the sun, or other things else by it. Too much intenseness in carnal wisdom dims the eye to spiritual objects."

From what hath been said, it appears, that the knowledge of God *by himself* is the first thing that takes place both in nature and grace, before ever God can be known *by the creature.* Only such is now the degenerate state of man sunk into sense and among the creatures, he hath so far lost the sight of God in himself, that he is blinded with seeing nothing but the creatures, and vain images of the creatures, by which he is ready to shape a God to himself, after the image of the creature, or by some imaginary ideas of corporeal things, having become *altogether vain in his imagination.* God, in commiseration of this *woeful state we are in,* condescended to give us an image of

himself. *Christ, the image of the invisible God*, is such an one, that though he be the visible image of the invisible God, yet we are not led by him away from the invisible God to a visible image; because, as he is the object of faith, he is the *invisible God* in our *visible nature*, yet, not the object of faith as he is *visible*, but being Mediator God man, we may go to him without a mediator, because he is God in our nature; but we cannot go to God without him, or to God out of Christ; because Christ is the Mediator between God and men, and *no man cometh to the Father but by him*. Nor can we see or know God savingly but in him, in whom we see all the glory of God; which we could not do, if he were not God. And we can never know him to be God, or God man, by any imaginary idea of him as man: Which I have shewed to be directly opposite to faith. A corporeal object, or true body as such, is what faith itself cannot believe to be an object of faith, but must believe it to be an object of sense; otherwise it could not be a true body, to be seen, felt, &c. So that to make such an object an object of faith, is most absurd. Nor is it here as in other cases; our senses and imagination may give occasion to our reason and faith, to think upon spiritual objects presented to them by corporeal things and images. But it is not so here: For though we only by *reason* may be helped to see God in the creatures which we can conceive, because by divine appointment they subsist in themselves, and so are conceiveable; yet the human nature of Christ is no such creature; and therefore inconceivable without the help of faith. It is true, the human body of Christ now in heaven may the object of an imaginary idea; but the image of it presented thus to the mind, being seen as a human body subsisting in a human subject or person, as other men are seen, (without which view of it we can have no idea of it at all,) is therefore directly opposite in the *idea*, to what it is in *reality*: Whereas the image of other creatures may be the true image of them. Therefore the imaginary idea of Christ as man, is so far from helping to the knowledge or conceiving of him as God-man in one person, that it cannot be the remote occasion thereof, but a hinderance; unless God take occasion thereby to bring things out of their opposites; as he did light out of darkness, life out of death, heaven out of hell, holiness out of sin, and all out of nothing. But then this is by a law of subordination and subserviency peculiar unto God alone; but not by any law of adjutancy or helpfulness, whether natural *or moral, given* to the rational world.

No man can see visible objects, unless he have eyes, or know *invisible things* unless he have *reason* or faith, or both; so *by reason* to know them rationally or naturally, and by

vinely or ſpiritually We know nothing unleſs God *gives* *underſtanding*, 1 John v. 20. We cannot ſee, unleſs God ive us eyes, nor hear, unleſs he give us ears, nor apprehend ne image of any thing, ſo as to know it, unleſs that image be me way formed within us. How can we know what or hoſe the copy or image is, unleſs we know the original? an any know that ſuch a picture is the image of a man. unſs he previouſly know the difference between a man and a orſe? We have the general knowledge of the image of a an, before we can underſtand it is the image of a man that e ſee: And we have the particular knowledge of ſuch a man, efore we can underſtand that the image is indeed the image f ſuch a particular man. Hence all the knowledge we have f viſible things by ſenſes and imagination, is what we ad *ſubjectively* before ever they were objects to our ſenſe and agination. Therefore the ſight of the viſible objects we e. helps not our viſive faculty, any more than it can give us yes to ſee them So far leſs can our bodily eyes helps us to e things inviſible: Which, ſo far as nature and grace go, n only be ſeen *naturally* by the eye of *reaſon* or natural unerſtanding, and *ſpiritually* by the eye of *faith* or ſpiritual unerſtanding; but not at all by the eye of ſenſe, or any imagnary idea, which can look no farther than outward viſible orporeal things. And as the *objective* knowledge of viſible ings can extend no farther than the *ſubjective* knowledge or revious faculty we had of ſeeing or knowing them; ſo the *bjective* knowledge we have of created things, cannot be phyically generated or helped by the objective view thereof. mean, the object ſeen gives no help to the power of ſeeing, o more than it can create eyes. Thus no creature ſeen or nown can create or increaſe *ſubjective* ſight or knowledge, owever that ſight may be dilated *objectively*. It is otherwiſe, own, with reference unto the ſaving knowledge of God: hough he cannot be known without previous ſpiritual unerſtanding; yet the more the object is revealed, the more ay the ſubjective power and faculty itſelf be enlarged and rengthened, becauſe God is a living and life-giving object. here is a creating virtue and power in the object diſcovered, nd therefore the faculty may be encreaſed by viewing the bject; hence it is ſaid, *Beholding his glory, we are changed:* et ſtill it holds true, we can know no more of him than he *ives us underſtanding to know*, 1 John v 20. No light can give ife and ſight, but he who is the light of the world, and the ight of life, John viii 12. The light of the natural ſun can*ot give us eyes, nor help* our ſight, though it give occaſion

to these that have eyes, both to see it, and other things that are corporeal, which are the objects of sense and imagination. Nor can these corporeal things discovered to the bodily senses, give any proper help, whatever occasions they may give to the sight and knowledge of spiritual things; which only can be seen by a rational and believing soul. Even though, while the soul is in the body, it doth not act without the bodily senses, that is, without their *presence* it does not; yet without their *help* and proper assistance it doth; even as a bird cannot fly in the air without its body; yet the body gives it no help in flying, but only the wings. Its body would rather hinder its mounting up, and help it to fall down to the ground. And no otherwise helpful are the powers of the body, when such helpfulness is ascribed to them as belongs only to the wings of the soul.

Since I wrote what is above in these few pages, I am the more confirmed in several of these things I have advanced, by having met with the following words of Charnock, vol. II. p 478. "Some question whether there be any natural knowledge of God imprinted upon man, or the knowledge of any one thing planted in him; but as he grows up (say they) he acquires a knowledge of things, from the objects of sense, and improvement of them by the understanding he is endued with, and, making deductions and conclusions by the help of reason, arrives to the apprehension of things. Yet this knowledge of God may be called natural, because, by the view of the visible things in the world, natural reason frames a certain conclusion, That there is a God, the cause of these excellencies he sees in the creatures. But the scripture seems to intimate a notion of God in the minds of men, Rom. i. 19. *That which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them;* a notion *within*, an excitation of it by objects *without*; that there is an internal light which doth manifest him, as well as an internal evidence of him by the creatures. But whether this be the import of this scripture or no, most understand no more by *manifest in them*, than manifest to them. Yet, since there is a law of nature in men, which is the rule of the excusings or accusings of conscience, in regard to which they are said to be a *law to themselves*, Rom. ii 14. and the *work of the law* said to be *written in their hearts*; the notion of a superior power, to which man is accountable for his actions, must be as natural as that; because it is the foundation of the actings of conscience; and the superstructure, being from an *implanted light*, is not like to be without a foundation of the *same kind*. To what purpose should conscience accuse, if there were *not* a supreme being, under whose censure such action

did fall! And, since the Heathens had a natural sentiment, that the extravagancies they were guilty of *were worthy of death*, Rom. i. 32 they must therefore have as natural a sentiment, that there was a judge of absolute power to inflict that death upon them, which their own consciences told them they were worthy of.—The notion of a God seems to be as natural as the law of nature, and those notions of conscience. And tho' this was more clear to man at his creation, and while he remained in a state of innocence, yet it is not blotted out of the mind of man.—All the outward objects which we see in the world, whence we argue that there is a God, seem only to revive and awaken that implanted notion, which lay covered with the rubbish of the fall: For, upon the first view of things, with what ease does this sentiment rise up in our minds? And nothing is more obvious, nothing more easily entertained than this, *that* there is a God, and *that* this God is a mighty, powerful, and perfect Being. Which evidenceth that there is a spark of it in the mind of man, which catches the outward flame so quickly upon its approach, as the snuff of a candle not quite extinguished, will snatch and attract the flame of another which comes near unto it." In a word, the being, goodness, wisdom, and power of God, are manifest, not only outwardly by the works of creation and providence, but also inwardly by the light of nature, Rom. i 19, 20 and ii 14, 15. Psalm xix. 1, 2, 3. Rom. i. 32. Conf. chap i. sect. 1*.

"Man, in his first creation, being made after the image of God, had communion with God, and knew him in himself, and the creatures in him, and in order to him. But, when once man by his fall *departed from the fountain of living waters, to cisterns that can hold no water*, or from God to the creature; then he so far lost the knowledge of God in himself, and knew no more of him than what he saw or could see in the creature. Formerly he conversed with God, and in God with the creature: But now he is conversant with the creature; and, abstract from revelation, hath no other way of conversing with God, but in or by the creature. This way of seeing and apprehending God by outward things, that are the work of God's hands, is become natural to man ever since the fall. And therefore nature's teaching is mostly in this way, by the creature to lead to some notions of the Creator; having turned our back toward him, and our face to the creature. But, when God teaches savingly and efficaciously, in order to restore that image of God that we lost, he restores to advan-

* *Mastricht prodrom. p. 82* ——Ilias omnes quæ imaginis particulas *superstites nobis a lapsu Deus voluit*,—ut sint velut semina, unde civilis *imago, per gratiam restaurationis*, postmodum reflorescevet.

tage, firſt, that knowledge of God that we loſt by our fall, and ſays, *Let there be light*, and in that light diſcovers us to ourſelves, and give us the knowledge of the creatures again in him. And, till we know God, we neither know ourſelves, nor any thing elſe as we ought to know. But, though God is the firſt object of all ſpiritual and ſaving knowledge, yet, in condeſcenſion to our now lapſed, natural ſtate, which cannot well take up God directly, but in the creature reflexly, he comes as far down to teach us in this very way as it is poſſible for him to do, namely, by aſſuming our nature into perſonal union with himſelf; yet ſo as that it is God that is firſt diſcovered coming down, and coming in to our nature, that we may ſee him there in a creature. If it were a mere creature, as I ſaid above, we could not ſee God there, to any ſaving advantage; any more than we can ſee or be acquaint with God ſavingly, by ſeeing any other creature, ſun, moon, or ſtars "Were not Chriſt the eſſential image of the Father in his own divine perſon, he could not be the *repreſentative* image of God unto us, as he is incarnate: For, if he were a man only, however miraculouſly produced and glorioufly exalted, yet the angels above, the glorious heavens, the ſeat and throne of God, with other effects of creating power and wiſdom, would no leſs repreſent his glory, than it could be done in him Yet are they no where jointly nor ſeparately ſtiled the *image of the inviſible God*, the *brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*; nor doth God ſhine into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of his glory in the face of them. And it argues the woful enmity of the carnal mind againſt God, and all the effects of his wiſdom, that, whereas he hath granted us ſuch a glorious image and repreſentation of himſelf; we like it not, we delight not in the contemplation of it; but either deſpiſe it, or neglect it, and pleaſe ourſelves in that which is incomparably beneath it." Dr. Owen *on the Perſon of Chriſt*, p. 381.

According to the new covenant, Jer. xxxi. 34 the firſt ſaving leſſon that God teacheth his people, of whom he ſays, *They ſhall be all taught of God*, is, God himſelf, *They ſhall all know me.*—But, becauſe our nature was ſunk among creatures, and into *fleſh*, and we therefore could not poſſibly come up to God, therefore God, in the perſon of his eternal Son condeſcends to come down to us, and become a creature, and is made *fleſh* by an inconceivable myſtery. But in mere creatures God cannot be ſeen ſavingly. Thouſands of ages have been making out this. He cannot be known, till he himſelf come and ſhew himſelf in his own light: Which he does in the perſon of his own Son in our nature; and in our nature

o conſtitute and faſhioned, as that it never was a mere creature, ior ever ſubſiſted but in that perſon of the Son of God, and is to xe ſeen by faith only, under the divine illumination of the Spirit.

The firſt leſſon, I ſay again, that God teaches, is God himſelf, *They ſhall all know me.* Light being the firſt work of the new creation, as it was the firſt word of command in the old, *Let there be light*, the good work is not firſt begun upon the ſenſes and imaginations, but upon the underſtanding; and, as Charnock expreſſes it, vol. ii. p. 140. "The new nature is conveyed by the knowledge of God and Chriſt, Phil. i. 9, 10. Col. iii. 10. As ignorance and error were the deformity of the old man, ſo wiſdom and knowledge are the firſt line in the beauty of the new." For, ſays he, p. 238. "The underſtanding is the original wheel which God primarily ſets in order; from whence he does ſecondarily influence all the other works which depend upon its guidance."

When God draws his image on a man, he begins with the underſtanding, 2 Cor. iv. 6. As limners in painting begin with the eye, God, in forming us for himſelf, firſt forms the eye, by which we ſee him. It is true, we do not ſee him ſavingly but in Chriſt, and we come to God by Chriſt only as the way: But we miſtake groſsly, if we ſuppoſe it is mere humanity, or Chriſt as man, that is the way to God. It is indeed the man Chriſt, not Chriſt as man, but Chriſt as Mediator, God-man in one perſon, that is the way to the Father. And therefore he that ſays, *I am the way*, ſays alſo in the ſame place, *He that ſeeth me, ſeeth the Father.* So that it is God come down in our nature, to make God known to us. And *in this light we ſee light*, Pſalm xxxvi. 9.

Mr. Robe proved, to my hand, that it is only Chriſt as a mere man, yea as a mere human body, or a corporeal object, that is the object of an imaginary idea, ſince that idea can have no other object; therefore he proves alſo to my hand, againſt himſelf, That that which is the object of an imaginary idea, can as ſuch be no part of the object of faith, unleſs a mere man could be the object of it. Which Turretine calls ſacrilege in the Socinians, (*Loci communes, tom. ii. p.* 628.) *Fides in merum hominem, qualem Sociniani Chriſtum fingunt, ſine ſacrilegio poni non poteſt*, Jer. xvii. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord, Curſed be the man that truſteth in man.* Thus Charnock, vol ii. p. 350. "As Chriſt is the Son equal with the Father, we believe in him as God. As he is Mediator, we believe in him as God's ſervant, furniſhed by him with authority and ability. He is the proper object of faith as he is one with the Father. If he were not God, he could not be the object of truſt, Jer. xvii. 5, 7. *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm. Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in the LORD.*" This LORD cannot be the object of fancy, but only of faith. Which leads *me to*

CHAP. VI.

Shewing in what reſpects the human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, ſo that it cannot be the object of any imaginary idea.

MR. ROBE having again and again charged me with *blaſphemy* and *hereſy*, p. 46. 47, 73. as if I had aſſerted in terms, *That the human nature of Chriſt is no part of the object of faith*; what he means by my having done ſo in terms, I cannot underſtand, unleſs he is ignorant of common language and logics both, with reference to what it is to ſay things *in terminis*; that is, in ſo many words. If this be his meaning, he knows it is a falſhood: But he himſelf proves, by adducing my words, that I do aſſert no ſuch things in terms. They are his own terms, and not mine; for mine are what he repeats thus, namely, *Can that be any part* of the object of faith *which is preceptible by the fancy of every man, and obvious to natural diſcerning?* Again, *Nothing ſenſible, nothing corporeal, nothing viſible, can properly be the object of that faith which is* the evidence of things not ſeen, Heb. xi. 1. And again, *That part of Chriſt which is viſible, was the object of ſenſe on earth, is the object of viſion in heaven, and may be the object of any man's fancy or imagination; but never was, or ever will be the object of faith, but as the inviſible God is ſeen therein and thereby*, &c. I am content that theſe and other words of mine in that appendix Mr. Robe quarrels, ſtand recorded there to the end of time to ſhew the injuſtice and ignorance of his charge which he infers from them. And though none that underſtand the goſpel, will need that I ſhould ſay a word to defend myſelf againſt ſuch a charge; yet I am content to take this opportunity of explaining the matter more fully; hoping it may be profitable to the reader, and that it may contribute to lead ſome ignorant perſons out of theſe dark chambers of imagery, into which Mr. Robe's doctrine, or any doctrine of that ſort, may have led them. I ſhall therefore here conſider, (1.) How the human nature of Chriſt cannot be the object of faith as it is the object of an imaginary idea. (2.) How, and in what reſpects, it is the object of faith, ſo as it cannot be the object of fancy and imagination.

FIRST, To ſhew that the human nature of Chriſt as it is perceptible by every man's fancy, and obvious to natural diſcerning, can be no part of the object of faith, that is, doth not belong at all to the object of ſaving faith; inſtead of many arguments, I ſhall illuſtrate this from a compariſon that I make of a twofold *word of God*. (1.) His word *doctrinal*; that is, the Holy Scripture, containing the revelation of his mind and will, made viſible, by being *put in* writing. (2.) His word *eſſential* or *perſonal*; that is, *Chriſt, the* ſecond perſon of the glorious Trinity, made viſible *when the* Word was made fleſh.

I. Now as to the first of these, the word of God contained in the Scripture is, I assert, the only rule of faith, and the immediate object or ground of it; but not as it is a visible and material book, perceptible by every man's eye when it is present, or fancy when it is absent, or out of the way; and thus the object of any man's sense that hath occasion to look to it, and handle it. A child, or an idiot, may be taken up with the gilded broads without, or the curious cuts within it, or even read the letters, syllables, words, and turn over the leaves of it, without being capable to search the scripture, or notice the sense of it. In this respect I say, as it is a visible material book, it cannot be called the word of God, more than any other book of the same general nature with it; that is, of the same kind, bulk, paper, print, with letters and syllables of the same kind, and equally material, visible and palpable by every one. In this sense it is not the rule nor the object of faith; because it is the object of sense, a mere creature, and the work of a man's hand, wherein nothing of the image of God can be directly seen, but only pieces of matter put together by human art. But the word of God is not properly palpable, material and corporeal, but invisible, incorporeal and spiritual; therefore called the *incorruptible seed*, the *word of the Lord that endureth for ever*: *My words*, says Christ, *are spirit and life*. It is properly God himself speaking to us, and revealing his mind and will, by this outward mean of his own appointment: And therefore he calls us to *search the scriptures*, to *believe his word*, and *to take heed to it, as unto a light shining in a dark place, a light to our feet. In this light*, being God himself manifesting his mind and will, *we may see light*, and by faith see the invisible God through this glass of his revealed will. Thus the word of God doctrinely considered, is the object of faith; not as it is a material book, for thus it is only the object of sense; but as it is spiritual, invisible, incorruptible, immortal: For thus the word of God, especially his word of grace in the gospel, is called, 1 Pet. i. 23, 24, 25. Isa. xl. 8. The Westminster Assembly wisely say, "That the word of God (which is *contained* in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament) is the only rule, &c." The invisible and spiritual things *contained* in these scriptures, are properly the word of God, and the object of faith: For there we see the image of the invisible God set before us, and God, who is a Spirit, declaring to us his mind and will in a way suitable to his nature, though by instituted means suitable to our nature. Thus the scriptures, as they have such spiritual *contents*, are the word and mind of God, and ought to be highly esteemed by all that desire to be saved to eternity: But as they are merely a material

book, they are neither the object of faith nor worſhip. And the neglect of this conſideration brought into the church of Rome, and from them to the church of England, the idolatrous and ſuperſtitious uſe of the Bible, particularly, in that mode of ſwearing, by *touching and kiſſing the goſpels:* Of which a divine writes, ſaying, "It hath been obſerved of former times, that, as the ſuperſtitious uſe of the Bible prevailed and became faſhionable among people, the true and proper uſe of it wore proportionably out of faſhion." It is true, ſays he, "the Bible and images differ as to their ſpiritual nature; and ſo does the ſun and Satan: But, as to their *eſſe adorabile*, or their objective preſence before the worſhippers, there is no difference; for both are creatures, memorative vicarious objects, at whoſe preſence, and through whom, God is adored." Thus a divine ordinance may be abuſed to idolatry, and become an idol. Fallen man is naturally fond of viſible objects in worſhip. And, if Satan be on a deſign to bring Proteſtants, who have renounced images, back to this way of it, what object can be leſs ſuſpected, and fitter for his purpoſe, than the Bible itſelf, a viſible thing to be ſlipt in between God and the worſhippers? To this purpoſe ſpeaks the author of *The new mode of ſwearing conſidered*; which he ſhews alſo to be directly contrary to our ſolemn covenants, in favours of which he ſpeaks to excellent purpoſe. But, leaving this digreſſion, I ſay, the word doctrinally conſidered, made viſible by being put in writing, is not the object or ground of faith, as it is a viſible material book, an object of ſenſe; but as it is a ſpiritual inviſible thing, evident to faith, which is *the evidence of things not ſeen.* Even ſo,

II. The word of God *perſonally* conſidered, namely, the eternal Son of God, made viſible when the *Word was made fleſh*, or aſſumed our human nature, John i. 14. is not, as corporeal, and viſible to the bodily eye, and perceptible by every man's fancy, or obvious to every man's natural diſcerning, the object of faith; but as, and becauſe he is God in our nature. And his human nature is not the proper object of faith and worſhip as ſuch, but as it is, and becauſe it is united to the divine perſon of the Son of God, and as it is the perſon of Chriſt deſigned and denominate by his human nature, or *God manifeſted in the fleſh.* To make the human nature of Chriſt as ſuch the proper object of faith or worſhip, is juſt ſuch idolatry as is forbidden in the ſecond commandment. The formal nature of which idolatry is *a doing* religious *ſervice unto that which by nature is not God*, Gal. iv. 8. Where the Heathen idolatry is deſcribed in theſe very terms *Ye did ſervice unto them which by nature are no gods.* The human *nature of* Chriſt as it is corporeal, viſible and perceptible by *every man's* fancy and imagination, is a mere creature. And Go

will not be a ſharer with a mere creature in religious worſhip nd honour. He will never accept nor approve that worſhip hereof any the leaſt part is offered to it, Iſa. xlii. 8. *I am JEOVAH, that is my name; and my glory* (in whole or in part) *will I not give to another.* Matth. iv. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* See alſo Deut. vi. 3. Zeph. i. 4, 5. God diſcharges all his ſubjects, under the ighteſt pain, from offering him worſhip in, by, or through any ere creature; but only in, by, and through the man Chriſt eſus, who never was a mere creature, but is God co-equal, nd co-eternal, and co-eſſential with the Father and Holy Ghoſt. et now, the human nature of Chriſt as it is perceptible by every man's fancy, and the object of an imaginary idea, can be no ther than a mere creature: For it ſurpaſſes the power of natural imagination, to form the image of one who is both a creature nd a Creator; or of an incarnate God. The human nature f Chriſt is no human nature ſubſiſting, like other human creaures, in a human ſubject or perſon, or by itſelf, and in itſelf, s its natural ſubject or *ſuppoſitum*; which can only be the obect of an imaginary idea: And conſequently it is no true image r idea of the human nature of Chriſt: Nor can ſuch an idea elp, but muſt rather hinder the right underſtanding even of hriſt's human nature. For, though the underſtanding (as Mr. Lobe alledges) may inſtantly form a complex idea of his being ore than a man, yet, by the help of ſuch an idea, the underanding can only form an additional conſideration, annexed to hat was the object of the imaginary idea; which, being no ue, but a falſe image of Chriſt's human nature, will not mix r incorporate with the true object of faith, the perſon of the od-man. Therefore, before the underſtanding can form a right hought or view of Chriſt as to his human nature, ſubſiſting n his divine perſon, it muſt neceſſarily throw away that menal image of Chriſt as man, as a ſpurious brat, and as the ood of mere natural and carnal imagination; that it may onceive aright of a myſtery above natural underſtanding, and far ore above all natural ſenſes and imaginations. All this the unerſtanding hath to do; yet cannot do but by faith and ſpiritual illumination, by the means of the goſpel, and *the Spirit of iſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt.* Chriſt's human ature, then, as viſible by the eye, or perceptible by the fancy, s no part of the true object of faith, but of ſenſe and fancy. That art of Chriſt which is corporeal and viſible, was, as I ſaid, the bject of ſenſe on earth, will be the object of viſion in heaven, nd may be the object of any man's fancy and imagination; but ever was nor will be the object of faith, but as the inviſible

God is ſeen therein and thereby, according to the ſcriptures I have cited above upon this head*.

The ſchoolmen of the church of Rome ſeem to be juſt of Mr. Robe's mind about the neceſſity of a viſible or imaginable picture and image of Chriſt as man. The reaſon one of them gives for it now under the goſpel, is, *After the incarnation of Chriſt, it is lawful to make an image of God; becauſe though as God he cannot be figured or pictured, yet as man he may.* "Alſo it was and is expedient to make an image of Chriſt; becauſe every one is not literate, nor hath leiſure to read: Therefore the fathers invented ſome pompous pictures deſcribing in images what Chriſt did for us; which may be of uſe to the quick memory. To which reaſon of the fathers, another [ſays he] may be added, becauſe *majus movent viſa, quam audita: We are more moved with things we ſee, than with what we hear.*" All theſe are words of a learned papiſt†. Peter Martyr, who went far enough in allowing images, tells us, (Loc. Com. p. 152.) "That Thomas Aquinas is to be wondered at, for giving this argument in favours of images, That God forbade the Jews to make images, becauſe at that time the *Word* had not aſſumed the human nature." And then anſwers, *Quid hoc ad rhombum?* &c. Then he makes mention of the ſeventh ſynod, (which was not allowed by the Papiſts, and) which was held by Conſtantine and his ſon, wherein it was decreed, "That Chriſt was not to be painted, feigned or figured, no not as touching his human nature. And the reaſon is ſet down and aſſigned, becauſe it is not poſſible to deſcribe by art any thing elſe but his human nature. Wherefore they that make ſuch things, ſeems to embrace the Neſtorian error, which ſeparated the human nature from the divine." When above I ſuppoſed Mr. Robe's doctrine of mental imagery touching Chriſt's human nature to favour of Neſtorianiſm, I had not glanced at this paſſage, ſo as to ſee my opinion fortified by the decree of ſuch an ancient ſynod. But, as faith comes by hearing, not by ſeeing any picture outward or inward, and as it is the evidence of things not ſeen; ſo Chriſt's human nature, as viſible by the eye, or imaginable by fancy, is but falſely called the human nature of Chriſt: Which is what cannot be ſeen here to be what it is, but only by faith‡. Arguments from reaſon, beſide what I have advanced, might be here multiplied to ſhew,

* To this purpoſe ſpeaks Auguſtine, De verbis Domini, homil. 58. prope finem. "Perfectum in Chriſto humanitatem adoro, quod a divinitate ſuſcepta atque unita divinitati eſt; ut non alium atque alium, ſed unum eumdumque Deum, & hominem Dei Filium eſſe, confitear, &c."

† *Ricardus de* Mediavilla ſuper quartuor libros ſententiarum Petri *Lombardi, p. 90*

‡ *Formale* relationis non incurrit in ſenſus, ſed percipitur vel intelligitur *fide.* Maccovii Centuria, p. 181.

that that which is perceptible by every man's fancy, or obvious to every one's imaginary idea, can be no part of the object of faith.

The invisible God, and he only, is the proper object of faith, or God in Christ is the object of saving faith; *but* no man's fancy or imaginary idea can see the invisible God, or God in Christ, nor any part of this object, as it is the object of faith: *Therefore* that which is perceptible by every man's fancy or imagination, can be no part of the object of faith. The *major* is clear from many scripture, such as Isa. xlv. 22. Matth. i. 23. John xiv. 9. The *minor* is clear from many concessions Mr. Robe hath made, That the objects of sense and imagination are only corporeal. Therefore the conclusion is evident, That that which is perceptible by every man's fancy, can be no part of the object of faith.

Again, That object which is only corporeal, and no more, cannot be the object of faith, or any part of it; *but* that which is, or may be the object of every man's imaginary idea, is only a corporeal object, and no more: *Therefore* the human nature of Christ, as it is the object of every man's imaginary idea, cannot be the object of faith, or any part of it. The *minor* is owned by Mr. Robe. But, if the *major* be denied, namely, the first branch, That that object which is only corporeal, and no more, cannot be the object of faith, this is evident; because that which is no more but corporeal, is the object of no more but sense if present, and fancy if absent; and as such, is not so much as the object of understanding, being of the nature of sensibles, not intelligibles; far less can it be the object of faith, the object whereof can neither be sensibles as such, nor intelligibles as such: For to make things that can be naturally seen and understood, the objects of faith, is to turn faith into sense and fancy, and to destroy the nature of faith, which is *the evidence of things not seen* nor understood*. The human nature of Christ, as existing in a divine person, is the object of faith: And therefore is, and since its formation still was more than human nature, namely, human nature existing supernaturally; which cannot be understood; and therefore must, as an object of faith, be believed, (viz. the *esse personæ.)* Whereas that part which is supposed to be un-

* Clavis artis Lullianæ, p. 41. Ne igitur concedamus illud esse verum quod sensui vel intellectui repugnat, exceptis articulis fidei; qui quidem non sunt contra, sed supra rationem.

Ars magna Lullii, p. 457. Supposito quod intellectus possit intelligere de Deo ea quæ per fidem potest credere, fides quidem destrueretur.—Quid est fides? Ad quod respondendum est, quod ipsa est virtus a Deo data, ut per *ipsam credamus id* quod per eam intelligere non possumus.—*Quare est fides? Et est* respondendum, quod ipsa est, ut intellectus per *eam possit credere id quod per* seipsum non potest intelligere.

derſtood, and of which we can form an imagination, (viz. the *eſſe ſubſtantiæ*, or) the human nature, cannot as ſuch be the object of faith, but of ſenſe, or viſion, or fancy; as is ſaid above. (2.) If the other branch of the *major* be denied, viz. that it can be no part of the object of ſaving faith; this I prove thus. Chriſt, the object of ſaving faith, is only one undivided and indiviſible object: *Therefore* that corporeal object of fancy can be no part of the object of faith. That Chriſt, the object of ſaving faith, is an undivided and indiviſible object that cannot conſiſt of, nor be divided into parts, I have already proven above. Though he hath two diſtinct natures, yet they do not ſubſiſt ſeparately, but jointly in one and the ſame divine perſon of Chriſt. And therefore as it is only by unbelief and vain carnal imagination they are viewed ſeparately; ſo it is only by faith that this glorious object is ſeen to be one, and one God ſeen to be in him, 1 Tim. iii. 5.

SECONDLY, I come now to ſhew, in what reſpect more particularly Chriſt's human nature is the object of faith, ſo as it cannot be the object of fancy, or of an imaginary idea. It is fit to obſerve, that, when a perſon or thing in the abſtract is ſaid to be the object of faith, ſuch as the perſon of Chriſt, or the thing that is underſtood by the humanity of Chriſt, that perſon or thing, being the *ſubject*, cannot be underſtood to be the object of faith properly, without ſuppoſing a *predicate*, or ſomething enunciated or declared concerning that perſon or thing, or ſome propoſition, truth or record anent the ſame. Therefore, when the perſon Chriſt is ſpoken of as the object of faith, then the meaning is, Chriſt as held forth in ſuch words, propoſitions, truths or records as theſe, namely, *That he is the Son of God*; That *he is the Sent of God*; That he is *the Redeemer*, and the like; For then faith hath a truth or teſtimony concerning him to believe; and lays hold upon his perſon as exhibited in that teſtimony, by receiving it, and *ſetting to its ſeal, that God is true*, John iii. 33. Hence an unbeliever is one that *believes not the record that God hath given of his Son*, 1 John v. 10. Again, when any thing relating to Chriſt is ſaid to be the object of faith, ſuch as his human nature, then the meaning is, his human nature as held forth in ſuch words, propoſitions, truths or records as theſe, namely, That Chriſt is *the Son of David; the Son of man*; That *to us a Child is born, whoſe name is, The Mighty God*; That *a virgin hath brought forth a ſon, whoſe name is Immanuel, God with us*; That *the Word was made fleſh*; That *he* was *made of a woman, made under the law*, made *in the likeneſs of man*, and the like: Then faith hath a truth or teſtimony concerning that human nature, that it is no natural thing,

* *Credere* enim nemo intelligitur, niſi quatenus fides ejus propria ad *creditum* aliquod enunciabile terminatur; ut recte docuit Thomas. *Daveu.* quæſt. determin. p. 133.

ving any exiſtence in itſelf, ſeparate from the Son of God, but
at *holy thing which is called the Son of God*, Luke i. 35. faith
ceiving the good tidings of great joy, *That unto us is born in the*
ty of David a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord; Luke ii. 10. 11.
id conſequently that he is the *true Meſſiah*, the *true Chriſt*, who
as the *babe of Bethlehem*; which, however little among the
e thouſands of Judah, was juſtly renowned for being the pro-
ieſied place of ſuch a birth. Hence the chriſtian poet's ſaying,
meta Bethlehem caput eſt orbis quæ protulit Jeſum. The teſti-
ony of God in his word, or his truth and veracity, (as I have
id elſewhere,) is the firſt object and immediate ground of faith.
arnock, vol. II. p. 1161. ſays, "The firſt act of faith conſiders
od as true.—The firſt language of faith in receiving the teſti-
ony of Chriſt, is a teſtifying, or ſetting to the ſeal, that God is
ue, John iii. 33 p. 218." The underſtanding is firſt exerciſed
out the word as *verum*, true; before the will be concerned in
ab *bonum*."

Theſe things being premiſed, the human nature of Chriſt is to
conſidered as the object of faith,

Firſt, In all theſe reſpects wherein there is any propoſition, re-
ord, record or teſtimony thereof in the word of God, called *the*
ord of the truth of the goſpel, Col. i. 5. And in theſe reſpects
e human nature cannot be the object of fancy, or of an ima-
inary idea, but only of faith; becauſe every branch of divine
uth relating to any thing, particularly to Chriſt's human na-
re, is a ſpiritual object; and, as it is a truth, is an inviſible thing,
be ſeen only by that faith that *is the evidence of things not ſeen.*
o this purpoſe I have elſewhere ſhewed, that truth is no corpo-
al thing; no image can be formed of it in the brain, no not of
is truth, *That Chriſt is man*, or *that he hath a true body and a*
aſonable ſoul: For this and all other truths belong to the *cre-*
nda, the things that are to be believed; but not to the things
at are to be ſeen either by ſenſe or fancy. It is true, many
ruths of the chriſtian religion were confirmed by miracles, that
ere obvious to the outward ſenſe: Yea, a great part of the fun-
mental articles thereof may be called *ſenſible truths*, conſidered
aterially, ſuch as Chriſt's human nature, death, reſurrection,
aſcenſion: All which the apoſtles relate as things they were eye
itneſſes unto, and which they ſaw and bare record unto. And
e ought to believe what was thus confirmed ſo clearly and diſ-
nctly by the teſtimony of ſenſe; which is not in all things to be
iſtruſted and diſregarded, John xix. 35. Yet whatever was, or
the object of ſenſe, cannot under that conſideration be the object
f faith; no more than ſounds and voices can be the object of the
enſe of ſeeing, or white and black colours the object of the ſenſe
f *hearing*. As the object of ſeeing is colours, and the object of

hearing is sounds; so the object of one sense cannot as suc
the object of another; far less can any object of sense be as
the proper and formal object of faith. Bread and wine i
sacrament, *materially* considered, are mere sensible objects
therefore not the objects of faith; but formally considere
the symbols of Christ's body and blood, then there is some
itual and invisible food to be found in them for that faith
is *the evidence of things not seen.* Thus the human nati
Christ, not *materially* or *corporeally* considered, but *formall*
spiri ually, as represented in some doctrinal proposition, g
truth, or divine declaration or testimony, is the proper obj
faith. Therefore,

Secondly, The human nature of Christ is the object of fa
all these respects wherein the invisible God is to be seen t
and thereby: For, says Christ, *He that hath seen me, hath*
the Father, John xiv. 9. and say the disciples, *The Word was*
flesh, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begot
the Father, full of grace and truth, John i. 14. Now, neit
this nor in the former respect can the human nature of Chr
the object of sense or fancy, but only the object of faith. Th
thing may be said of mental images of Christ as man that Cl
Alexandrinus in his *Adhortat. ad Gent.* said with respect to g
images in the worship of God: "Christians have no sensibl
ages made of sensible matter; because they worship God
understanding;" intimating, that to worship God and Chr
images, presented either outwardly to the eye, or inwardly t
fancy, is to worship ignorantly, and without understanding
that it is unworthy of christians, that is, even those that
Christ to be come in the flesh; for they know he came n
make that flesh the object of their worship, but God mani
in the flesh. Hence also Lactantius, in his *Institut. ad Co*
lib. 2. asserts peremptorily, "where there are any images,
is no religion." And yet, more directly to the present pu
Dr. Owen, in his *Vindication of the animadversions on Lua*
p. 519. speaking of Christ as the image of the invisible God,
"Christ is the *essential* image of the Father in his divine na
inasmuch as he is partaker with him in all the same divine pr
ties and excellencies, and *morally* in his whole person God and
as Mediator, in that the love, grace, will and wisdom of the F
are in him fully represented unto us; and not in the *ou*
lineaments of his human nature, Isaiah lii. and liii.—And w
all this to your images, that give us the shape and form of a
and of what individual person, none knows?—And, whether
the image of this man or that man, of Christ himself, or S
Peter, or *Simon Magus*, he hath no ground to imagine, but
is suggested unto him by his imagination.—God minds his p

hat in the great manifeſtations of his glory they ſaw no manner of likeneſs or ſimilitude; which ſhould have been ſhewn unto em, had he been by any ſenſible means or matter to be repreented unto them." So ſay I; the human nature of Chriſt is the bject of faith, not *materially* conſidered, in the outward lineaents of it, which can only be the object of ſenſe or fancy, or vain nagination; but *formally* conſidered, in all theſe reſpects wherein e inviſible God is to be ſeen therein and thereby; and conſequently, in theſe and the like following reſpects.

1. The human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, in ſo far s the inviſible God is to be ſeen in the marvellous and preternatural *conception* and *birth* of it. And ſo it is propoſed to our aith, Luke i. 35. *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the ower of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee: Therefore alſo that oly thing that ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God.* aith looks to the teſtimony of God in his promiſe of this wonderful birth, Gen. iii. 15. Iſa. vii. 14. and in his word declaring he accompliſhment of that promiſe, as he does in the goſpels rit by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; and the glory of God's aithfulneſs, power and pity, manifeſted therein. In theſe reſpects it is the object of faith, and not at all the object of ſenſe and fancy. The imaginary idea of a natural birth cannot help us to believe ſo much as the truth of the fact, That *to us a child is born, whoſe name is, The Mighty God:* Nay it cannot help to believe, that in ſuch a place a woman brought forth a child. It is true, as the imaginary doctrine ſays, none can believe it without the imaginary idea of a woman and a child: Yet one's having the ble idea of both theſe can no more help him to believe any remarkable ſtory of a woman that brought forth a child, than a man's having the idea both of a *mountain* and a *moon*, would help im to believe that a mountain brought forth a moon. Nay ſuch deas help people only to know the materials that are the objects f ſenſe. And this knowledge all mankind have, that are in their aits, and have common ſenſe. But this ideal and imaginary knowedge cannot help them to believe any propoſition relating to heſe materials to be a truth or falſhood, a thing credible or incredible. The formal object of the human faith of this, That a woman brought forth a child, is ſome human teſtimony aſſerting t as a truth. And the object of divine faith relating to this myſtery, the incarnation of Chriſt, or his human nature, its conception and birth, is the divine teſtimony, aſſerting this truth, That virgin did conceive and bring forth a ſon, whoſe name is called *Immanuel, God with us.* Of this bleſſed wonderful incarnation of the Son of God, and the deſign of it, ſome of the ancient fathers write very ſweetly; whoſe words quoted by Davenant in Col. p. 250. may be thus tranſlated from the *Latin*. *Irenæus* ſays, "How can *the Ebionites* be ſaved, if he be not God who wrought their

ſalvation on the earth.' And how ſhall man come to God, if do not come to man?" Athanaſius ſays, "If Chriſt had not be true Son of God, man had not firmly been united to God: For a mere man has got, may be loſt, as it fell out in Adam. that the grace and gift might remain firm, God put on our that through this might be given to us all ſpiritual good, t in ſure poſſeſſion." Cyrillus ſpeaks thus: "The Word is fleſh, that in him, and in him alone, the nature of man, crowned with the praiſe and glory of innocency, might be e ed with the Holy Spirit, never to depart thence now, as it put with Adam, but to abide therein for ever." The Son of was incarnate, that human nature, being pulled away from by ſin, and alienated from the life and fellowſhip of God, mi this way be moſt fitly reſtored to communion with God, and firmly preſerved therein; and that, as Athanaſius ſaid, our being of earth, might not go to earth, but, being joined to by the Word that was made fleſh, might by him be brought heaven. This myſterious birth and incarnation of Chriſt, the glorious rays of divine power, wiſdom, and grace thus ſhi therein, is indeed a ſweet object of faith: But there is no for fancy here, nor for imaginary ideas.

2. The human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, in ſo as the inviſible God is to be ſeen in the *purity* and *holineſs* o Heb. vii. 26. *He was holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate f ſinners.* "The bringing forth of our nature [ſays Dr. Owe the *perſon of Chriſt*, p. 134.] in ſuch an inſtance, wherein it ſh relate no leſs really and truly unto the firſt Adam than w ourſelves, whereby there is the ſtricteſt alliance of nature tween him and us, yet ſo as not in the leaſt to participat the guilt of the firſt ſin, nor of the defilement of our n thereby, muſt be an effect of infinite wiſdom, beyond the con tions of any created underſtanding. And this, as we kn was done, in the perſon of Chriſt: For his human na was never in Adam as his repreſentative; nor was he priſed in the covenant wherein he ſtood: For he derived it l ly, only from and after the firſt promiſe, when Adam ceaſe be a common head. Nor did it proceed from him by natural neration, the only means of the derivation of its depravation pollution: For it was an *holy thing*, created in the wom the virgin by the power of the *Moſt High*. O the *depths of wiſdom and knowledge of God!*" Here then is a view of human nature of Chriſt that can only be ſeen by faith, bu no imaginary idea.

3. The human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, i far as the inviſible God is to be ſeen in the *aſſumption* of it *perſonal ſubſiſtence* with the Son of God. "This the ſcrip *expreſſes ſometimes actively*, (ſays Dr. Owen,) with reſpect u

e divine nature acting in the perſon of the Son, the nature
ming, as in Heb. ii. 14.—16. Phil. ii. 6, 7. ſometimes
ſively, with reſpect unto the human nature of Chriſt, the
ture *aſſumed*, John. i. 14. Gal. iv. 4. Rom. i. 3. This is the
ndation of the divine relation between the Son of God and
e man Chriſt. We can only adore the myſterious nature of

Fulgentius, cited by Davenant, ſays, *Hoc Deus in nobis
vavit, quod pro nobis ſuſcepit; & illam naturam participem fecit
utis, quam ſibi conjunxit: God ſaves that in us, which he took on
s for us; and he made that nature a partaker of ſalvation, which
united to himſelf.* Hence I ſhall open this myſtery a little
rther in the following words. Chriſt, the eternal Word,
as made fleſh; he took on him ſoul and body, that he might
re ſoul and body. He did not aſſume our perſon; why?
'en that our happineſs might ſtand in his perſon, and not in
rs; that no man might *glory* in himſelf, or in his own per-
n, *but only in the Lord*; and that he might be *all in all*. Chriſt
ves indeed our perſons, but in a myſterious way; not by
ſuming our perſonality, or by becoming a human perſon,
t by receiving that which conſtitutes our human perſonality
to his divine perſonality. Soul and body unite conſtitute
human perſon. But though human nature in us is a human
:rſon, and Chriſt aſſumed our human nature; yet our human
ature is Chriſt is not a human perſon; otherwiſe he would
ive two perſons: But the two diſtinct natures in him are
t one perſon. O myſtery of myſteries! He ſaves our na-
ire, and thereby our perſons, by aſſuming our nature, not
ur perſon; and thus ſaves our nature, not in our perſon, but
n his own divine perſon, to which he perſonally united our
ature only; that our nature in him might have no human
erſonality; and that thus the ſalvation of our perſons might
ot be owing to a human perſon, but to a divine one; nor to
an, but only to God; nay, nor to our nature in God, which
as the *inſtrument*, but to God in our nature, who is the *a-
or*: That is, it is owing to the perſon God man, whoſe
manity is no perſon, and whoſe perſonality is the ſecond
erſon of the glorious Trinity. From what is ſaid, it is the
ſier to anſwer this queſtion, How he ſaves all that he aſ-
med, when he did not aſſume our perſon, but our nature?
or he aſſumed our whole human nature, ſoul and body, and
aſſumed that which conſtitutes a perſon in us, but not in
im: Therefore, by ſaving our nature, he ſaves our perſons;
ecauſe in us our nature is inſeparable from our perſon But
n Chriſt they are ſeparate; becauſe, had they been united in
im, that is, had he aſſumed our nature and perſon both, he

had ſaved neither of them; becauſe he would have been but a ſingle human perſon, not related to God as he is, nor equall related to the whole human race, as now he is, when, by aſſuming our nature, the ſecond Adam is as ſib to all mankind as the firſt Adam was. Had he aſſumed our perſon, that perſon, being but a human perſon, had been unable to ſave us, for his blood had not been the blood of God. Had he aſſumed our perſon, he could have but ſaved that perſon, or behoved to have had two perſons, a weak and a ſtrong one, and our ſalvation behoved to be owing both to God and to man. But God never *laid our help* upon two perſons, but *upon one that is mighty*, Pſal lxxxix. 19 1 Tim ii. 5. The Son of God therefore aſſumed our human nature into the ſame perſonality with himſelf, that he might ſave our nature, and thereby our perſons; not by aſſuming our perſon, but our nature. Here is footing for faith and ſpiritual underſtanding. *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God made manifeſt in the fleſh.* It tranſcends all natural underſtanding, and much more all imaginary ideas. Again,

4. The human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, as the inviſible God is to be ſeen in the *union* of it with his divine nature in the ſame perſon. This follows upon the aſſumption juſt now mentioned, and is called the *hypoſtatical* union. This is included and aſſerted in a multitude of divine teſtimonies, Iſa. vii. 14. Matth. i. 23 Iſa. ix. 6. Of this, Dr. Owen, on the *perſon of Chriſt*, p. 154. ſays, "That the ſame perſon ſhould be both the *Mighty God*, and a *child born*, is neither conceivable nor poſſible, nor can be true, but by the union of the divine and human natures in the ſame perſon*." —P 155. "This, in the writings of the ancients, is frequently called *the grace of union*; God of his free grace thus deſigning and dignifying our nature. This is that peculiar dignity of Chriſt's human nature, wherein no creature is participant, nor ever ſhall be unto eternity.—The glorious meetneſs and ability of the perſon of Chriſt for and unto all the acts of his mediatory office, flows from this union of his natures in the ſame perſon; without which not one of them could be performed to the benefit of the church, &c." p. 156. "The human nature of Chriſt hath no perſonal ſubſiſtence of its own, but by union to the perſon of the Son of God. With reſpect unto this union, the name of Chriſt is called *Wonderful*, as that which hath the pre-eminence in all the effects of divine wiſdom."—p. 158. "The honour that is due

* *Unio naturarum* Chriſti nobis eſt incomprehenſibilis; quia unio eſt *finitæ cum infinita*. Et ſi unio inter Chriſtum & eccleſiam nobis eſt *incomprehenſibilis*, multo majus hoc myſterium. Maccov. reg. p. 125.

unto the Son of God, is divine, religious, or the owning of all eſſential divine properties in him, with a due ſubjection of ſoul unto him thereon. But to give this honour unto the man Chriſt Jeſus, without a ſuppoſition of the ſubſiſtence of his human nature in the perſon of the Son of God, and ſolely on that account, is highly idolatrous." Hence the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man cannot belong unto, or apprehend any thing of the object of faith; becauſe, as I have ſhewed before, this manner of the ſubſiſtence of Chriſt's human nature is infinitely above the underſtanding of all mere creatures. And to make it the object of fancy, is to make it nothing but an idolatrous picture Fancy can ſuppoſe no ſuch ſubſiſtence: And therefore to make the object of fancy here, the object of faith in any reſpect, muſt be with a witneſs highly idolatrous. "The divine nature as in that perſon (ſays Dr. Owen, *ubi ſupra*, p 159.) is its *ſuppoſitum*. In itſelf it is ἀνυπόστατος, that which hath not a ſubſiſtence of its own, which ſhould give it individuation, and diſtinction from the ſame nature in an, other perſon: But it hath its ſubſiſtence in the perſon of the Son, which thereby is its own." Hence, (ſays the ſame author, *on the Spirit*. p 129.) "The perſonal union of Chriſt, or the inſeparable ſubſiſtence of the aſſumed nature in the perſon of the Son, was neceſſary and indiſſoluble; ſo as it was not impeached, or ſhaken in the leaſt by the temporary diſſolution of that nature by the ſeparation of ſoul and body: For the union of the ſoul and body of Chriſt did not conſtitute him a perſon, that the diſſolution of them ſhould deſtroy his perſonality; but he was a perſon by the uniting of both unto the Son of God"

5. The human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, in ſo far as the inviſible God is to be ſeen in the *unction* of it by the Spirit. "The firſt unction of the human nature by the Spirit was, when that nature being formed in the womb of the virgin by a creating act of the Hol Spirit, was in that inſtant of its conception ſanctified, and filled with grace accordingly to the meaſure of its receptivity*. And being not in the loins of Adam morally before the fall, the promiſe of his incarnation being not given till afterward. the ſin of Adam could on no account be imputed to him: And being not begotten by natural generation, (as was ſaid,) it derived no taint of original ſin or corruption from Adam; that being the only way and means of its propagation His nature was alſo innocent, ſpotleſs, and free of ſin, as Adam's was in the day wherein he was created. But, beſides this, it was by

* *Vid. Dr.* Owen on the Spirit, p. 136, 137. &c.

the Holy Spirit positively endued with all grace; of which afterward he was only capable of further degrees, as to actual exercise, but not of any new kind of grace. Of this we are told, Isa. xi 1, 2, 3. From his conception he was an *holy thing*. But Christ was afterward anointed by a collation of extraordinary gifts for the discharge of his office on earth particularly his prophetical office, at his baptism, Matth. iii. and according to the words of the prophet, Isa. lxi 1. which Christ applies to himself, Luke iv. 18." This super-eminent unction or anointing of the human nature of Christ by the Spirit, is the object of faith The invisible God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, may be seen in this glass of Christ's humanity thus anointed; which no imaginary idea can see.

6. The human nature of Christ is the object of faith, in so far as the invisible God is to be seen in the fulness of it. Christ's humanity was not only anointed, but filled from his conception. He was an holy thing, radically filled with the perfections of grace and wisdom, inasmuch as the *Father gave him not the Spirit by measure*, John iii. 34. *The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory,—full of grace and truth*, John i. 14. His fulness and furniture for our use is wonderfully asserted and set forth to us, Col i. 19. and ii 9. *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* And in him dwells all the *fulness of the Godhead* bodily; that is, in his person God-man. But his human nature as subsisting in his divine person, hath all that perfection and fulness of grace communicated to it, which our created nature, thus subsisting in the eternal Son of God, is capable of. And *out of his fulness, we all receive, and grace for grace.* The pipe or conduit of his humanity being inseparably united to the infinite inexhaustible fountain of the Deity, who can look into the depth thereof? This fulness of Christ's human nature, or this human nature of Christ in its fulness, is the object of faith only, but of no imaginary idea.

7 The human nature of Christ is the object of faith, as the invisible God is to be seen in the *properties* of it, as they are recorded and asserted in the word. I speak not here of his moral properties belonging to his whole person, by which he might be denominate a *holy man*, a *harmless man*, a *wise man*, a *righteous man*, a *merciful man*; in which, and other such respects, he was the image of the invisible God, fully representing to us the moral perfections of God, and wherein also he is the object of faith, not of any imaginary idea: But I speak *even of the* properties of his human nature as such. And *these properties* may be viewed two ways; either as properties *that belonged* to his human nature during his life time on

earth, and before his reſurrection, or theſe that belonged to it after the ſame.

(1.) There are properties that belonged to it, while he lived on earth, and before his reſurrection; and theſe are either eſſential or accidental. Theſe that are *eſſential* to his human nature, and always permanent, are ſuch as theſe: His being a *true man*, having a true body and a reaſonable ſoul; a *perfect man*, having the whole human nature ſoul and body unite. Again, theſe properties that are *accidental* or adventitious, occaſioned by his circumſtances, as *Surety* in a humbled ſtate, and which therefore were not to remain, are theſe by which he might be denominated a *poor man*, in a mean condition; a *man of ſorrows, and acquainted with griefs*, and of the ſame infirmities with us, except ſinful; a *tempted man*, a *wounded man*; a man that was *circumciſed* when a *child*; a man that had his *head crowned with thorns*, and his *hands*, and *feet*, and *ſide pierced*; a *mortal man*; and, for a time, what we uſe to call a *dead man*, ſoul and body being ſeparate; and thereafter a *buried man*: Where the denomination of the perſon is taken from the body, by an uſual figure, a ſynedoche, of the part for the whole. Now, moſt of theſe properties, conſidered *materially*, were the objects of ſenſe then, and are the objects of imagination now; and ſo not properly the objects of faith: But, *formally* conſidered, as *truths* and propoſitions laid before us in the word of faith, they are the proper objects of faith; but not at all of ſenſe or imagination: For none can form in his mind the image of a propoſition, or of any of theſe things that are called *credenda*, things to be believed: It is abſurd and ridiculous to ſuppoſe, that any *ſubject* whatſoever can be the proper object of faith, or a thing that can be believed, without ſuppoſing ſome *predicate*, or ſome thing aſſerted concerning that ſubject. Now, that aſſertion only is the proper object of faith, or unbelief, or is believed either to be true or falſe, according as it hath or wants a proof or teſtimony for confirming that it is a truth. Therefore I ſaid, in entering upon this particular, that the human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith in all the properties of it, as they are recorded and aſſerted in the word: Now, this record, aſſertion, or relation is a ſpiritual thing, having no corporeal forms: And the teſtimony of the inviſible God confirming it, as with a *Thus ſaith the Lord*, is alſo a ſpiritual and inviſible thing; and ſo is the object only of faith: Which ſtands allenarly upon the divine teſtimony; without which theſe things are not among the number of things to be believed, *nor any part of them*, but only things to be ſeen or imagined;

that is, objects of ſenſe and fancy, but not of faith. Neither do theſe properties mentioned their being the objects of ſenſe and fancy, help to make them the objects of faith: For though the believing ſoul cannot act in this preſent ſtate without bodily ſenſes, yet corporeal powers can view them no otherwiſe than as corporeal things abſtractly, and thus as objects neither of faith nor unbelief: But, as they are the objects of faith, or truths to be believed upon a divine teſtimony, they are ſpiritual and inviſible things. And, as they are things not ſeen, they are the proper objects only of that faith which is *the evidence of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1. and *which looks not to the things that are ſeen, but the things that are not ſeen*, 2 Cor. iv 18.

(2.) There are properties of the human nature of Chriſt that belong to it after his reſurrection, and now in his glorious ſtate. "Each nature of Chriſt [ſays Dr. Owen on *the perſon of Chriſt*, p. 160.] doth preſerve its own natural, eſſential properties entirely unto and in itſelf, without mixture, without compoſition or confuſion, without ſuch a real communication of the one unto the other, ſo as that the one ſhould become the ſubject of the *properties* of the other. The Deity in the abſtract is not made the humanity, nor on the contrary, &c." And the ſame author, on *the Spirit*, p. 130, ſays, "The human nature therefore, however inconceivably advanced, is not the ſubject of infinite eſſentially divine properties." Yet how far theſe are above the ſphere of natural ſenſe and imagination, may appear from the conſideration of the properties even of Chriſt's *human body* now glorified, which were not the properties of it before his reſurrection. How glorious muſt the human body of Chriſt be, when it is to be conſidered now as a *ſpiritual* and *immortal body!* The ſpirituality of it can be no leſs, however more it be, than that which will take place in the bodies of the ſaints after their reſurrection, ſpoken of 1 Cor xv 44. *It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body*, in reſpect of quality not in reſpect of ſubſtance. And verſe 53. *This mortal muſt put on immortality.* Of theſe glorious qualities of Chriſt's human body, I ſuppoſe the apoſtle ſpeaks, Phil. iii. 20, 21. *Our converſation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body.* Dr. Owen on the *glory of Chriſt*, p 92, 93. writes thus: "That very nature itſelf which he took on him in this world, is exalted unto glory. Some, under a pretence of great ſubtlety and accuracy, do deny that he hath either fleſh or blood in heaven; that is, as to the ſubſtance of them; however you may ſuppoſe that they are changed, purified, glorified. The great foundation of the church

and all gospel faith is, that he was *made flesh*, that he did partake of flesh and blood, even as did the children. That he hath forsaken that *flesh* and *blood* which he was *made* in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, wherein he lived and died, which he offered unto God in sacrifice, and wherein he rose from the dead, is a Socinian fiction. What is the true nature of the glorification of the *humanity* of Christ, neither those who thus surmise, nor we, can perfectly comprehend. It doth not yet appear what we ourselves shall be; much less is it evident unto us, what he is, whom we shall be like. But that he is still in the same *human nature*, wherein he was on the earth, that he hath the same rational soul, and the same body, is a fundamental article of the christian faith. [It is the object of faith, not of sense or imagination: For] This nature of the man Christ Jesus is filled with all the divine graces and perfections whereof a limited created nature is capable. It is not deified; it is not made a god; it doth not in heaven coalesce into one nature with the divine by a composition of them. It hath not any essential property of the Deity communicated unto it, so as subjectively to reside in it; it is not made *omniscient*, *omnipresent*, *omnipotent*: But it is exalted in a fulness of all divine perfection ineffably above the glory of angels and men. It is incomprehensibly nearer God than they all; hath communications from God, in glorious light, love and power, ineffably above them all. But it is still a creature." Of the spirituality, glory and immortality of Christ's human body now in heaven, Charnock writes at large, vol. ii. p. 1093, 1094. Now, these properties of Christ's glorified body in heaven cannot possibly be the object of any imaginary idea; because it can form no image of spirituality and immortality. These properties, then, can only be the object of faith looking to these invisible things in the glass of divine revelation, such as that, Rev. i. 18. wherein our Lord Jesus proclaims from heaven the immortality of his human body, that was once mortal and dead saying; *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.* Whence I also here notice, that none of those properties of Christ's human nature that I have mentioned, can be the object of faith considered separate from his divine nature and person. Though the denomination of the person should be taken from any one of these properties, by an usual metonymy, suppose from the lowest of them, namely, his being once a *dead man*; yet it is the *person* denominated by that property, *which faith must* and will have in view; though a person that *could never die*, yet it is the *person* that says, I was dead.

Pſal. xlvii. 5. God in our nature *aſcending on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men*, Pſalm lxviii. 18. When the man Chriſt ſat down at the right hand of God, it was the Son of God in our nature *ſitting down at the Father's right hand*, according to Pſalm cx. 1. *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord Sit thou at my right hand* And when the man Chriſt will come to judge the world, it will be the perſon God-man: For *God will judge the world in righteouſneſs by the man whom he hath ordained*, Acts xvii. 31 and, *God will be judge himſelf*, Pſalm l 6. The human nature of Chriſt then, in all theſe degrees of its exaltation, is the object of faith only, not of any imaginary idea; becauſe in every one of them the inviſible God is to be ſeen; and none of them are ſeen by faith, if the inviſible God be not ſeen therein and thereby: For here every act of faith is a *ſeeing him that is inviſible*. In ſhort, none of theſe appearances of Chriſt, from his incarnation, or being born, to his exaltation unto heaven, which are, I may ſay, the foot and the top of the ladder that reaches between earth and heaven, nor any of the interveening ſteps or rounds between theſe two, as the doing, dying, riſing of Chriſt; none of them all can be ſeen to any profit or advantage by fancy or imagination or as they are human actions diſcernible in a natural way; but only as they are ſeen by faith to be the appearances of the great God, in our nature, and in our room. • On which ſubject a chriſtian poet ſings very ſweetly in the following words:

Ille Deus rerum cœli terræque Creator,
Me propter ſacra virgine natus homo eſt.——
Me geſſit moriens; me, victa morte, reſurgens,
Et ſecum ad Patrem me ſuper aſtra tulit. PROSPER.

10. The human nature of Chriſt is the object of faith, in ſo far as the inviſible God is to be ſeen in all theſe profitable *ends* and *purpoſes* for which the Son of God was clothed with our nature. Many of theſe bleſſed ends might here be enumerated; ſuch as, (1.) That he aſſumed our nature, to aſſure us that this human nature of ours, though death and a thouſand changes ſhould paſs upon it, cannot be utterly loſt; for it ſubſiſts for ever in Chriſt. And came he down to dwell in it alone, as he would do at laſt, if we did not ſubſiſt in death and after death? The Lord of life, and he who is life itſelf, would never dwell or unite with death, but with a deſign to *ſwallow up death and victory*, 1 Cor. xv. 54. Surely, (2.) His wonderful condeſcenſion in aſſuming our nature into his eternal and unchangeable perſonality, is not to be confined, in its *end* and deſign, to the few ſhort and troubleſome days we *have* in this life. Certainly it is to reach to the unbounded *bounds* of eternity, even as long as the union between

ro natures ſubſiſts in him. who hath an *unchangeable prieſt-*
od, becauſe he continueth for ever, Heb vii. 24. The efficacy
en of this myſterious union muſt comprehend in it a glori-
s reſurrection of the body, and an immortal happy life to
e ſoul; and ſo to our human nature, ſoul and body re-uni-
d. (3.) He aſſumed our human nature for this end, that
l his ſeed, vitally unite to him by faith, may have a ſure
edge of a happy life and ſubſiſtence for ever, being related
him who abides for ever, and ſib to him who hath been
old, and is from everlaſting to everlaſting God; who hath
ken on him our fleſh, that we might receive his Spirit;
ich is a *well of water* in the ſoul, that, though death is in
e way, runs higher and higher, till it empty itſelf in *eter-*
l life, John iv. 14. (4.) He aſſumed our nature for this end,
give proof and evidence of his good-will to the children
men, and that, living or dying, we might always have to
with God in our nature, an incarnate God. But I con-
e myſelf to theſe ends and purpoſes which Mr. Robe him-
f quotes, p 56. namely, theſe mentioned in our Larger
techiſm; where it is ſaid, "It was requiſite that the Medi-
or ſhould be man, that he might advance our nature, Heb.
16. perform obedience to the law, Gal. iv. 4. ſuffer and
ke interceſſion for us in our nature, Heb. ii. 14. &c. have
ellow feeling of our infirmities, Heb. iv. 15 that we might
ceive the adoption of ſons, Gal. iv. 5. and have comfort and
ceſs with boldneſs unto the throne of grace, Heb. iv. 16."
all theſe profitable ends for which Chriſt aſſumed our na-
re it is the object of faith only. And hence the imagina-
idea, that reſpects and reaches only to corporeal things,
the moſt uſeleſs and unprofitable thing that ever was brought
to have any concern about objects of faith: For it is im-
ſſible to form in the head an image of any one of theſe
eſſed and profitable ends for which it was requiſite that the
ediator ſhould be man; for they are all *ſpiritual ends*, and
iritual things, that cannot be ſeen but with *ſpiritual eyes*.
atural ſenſes and imagination can look no farther here,
an fleſh or mere humanity: Which it but a *knowing Chriſt*
ter the fleſh, by forming a mental image of it; which none
ill believe to be profitable for *any good end*, who believe
hat Chriſt himſelf hath ſaid, That *the fleſh profiteth nothing*,
nd that *his words are ſpirit of life*. Hence, if we ſee not
ivinity in Chriſt, we ſee nothing profitable To view Chriſt
a man, or in his humanity ſimply, is moſt unprofitable, vain,
ea and ſinful We may think of any other man as a man
ithout ſin. But to think of Chriſt as man in the ſame man-
r *we think of any* other man, is unlawful and ſinful; be-

cauſe he is God, and ought to be as much honoured as Ge
Father, John v. 23. *That all men ſhould honour the Son,*
as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, h
eth not the Father which hath ſent him. To think of hi
man by an imaginary idea, or to know him in that reſpe
as I have ſhewed, no part of rational knowledge in itſel
cannot give Chriſt the honour even of his manhood, but
ly thinks of a human body. But, ſuppoſe one have th
tional knowledge of his human nature, or of him as ma
does no honour to Chriſt, unleſs by faith he give him the
honour as God that he gives the Father. And though a
diator the Father is greater than he, who in that ſtati
God's ſervant in our nature, even *the man* that is *God's f*
Zech. xiii. 7. and *who, being in the form of God, thought*
robbery to be equal with God, Phil. ii. 6 yet hence true
honours Chriſt in his *divinity*; particularly, (1.) In the
ity of his *perſon*, while it *beholds his glory as the only begot*
the Father, John i. 14. (2.) In the divinity of his *office*,
it ſees him to be the Sent of God; the Sealed of God
Chriſt of God, anointed to ſuch a work as none could
cute but he who is God, John vi 69. (3.) In the divinity
doing, or active obedience, in *fulfilling all righteouſneſs*,
ing in everlaſting righteouſneſs; called therefore, *THE L*
OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, Jer. xxiii. 6. and *the righteo*
of God, Rom. i. 17. (4.) In the divinity of his *ſuffe*
death and blood, as not only ſatisfying to God's infinit
tice for man's ſins, Eph. v. 2. but alſo meritorious
grace, and making the purchaſe of eternal life, Eph
(5.) In the divinity of his *reſurrection* and *aſcenſion*, as I
ſhewed above; and conſequently in the divinity of his ſtr
and ability *to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God b*
becauſe he ever liveth to make interceſſion, Heb. vii 25. I
add, (6.) The divinity of his *humanity*; as Auguſtine ſ
of his human divinity, and divine humanity, becauſe o
perſonal union of the divine and human natures of ou
manuel, God man; ſo as faith cannot view them ſepar
I might ſpeak of the divinity of his names, titles, attrib
ordinances, words and works. Not one of them all can b
object of an imaginary idea; becauſe it cannot ſee inv
divinity in any of them. An imaginary idea, for exa
of his *blood*, is an idle vain imagination: becauſe it c
view the divinity thereof, as being *the blood of God*, Acts x

Thus I have ſhewed in what reſpects the human natu
Chriſt is the object of faith only, ſo as it cannot be the
of an imaginary idea, nor perceptible by any man's f

CHAP. VII.

PROPOSED *next* to adduce the ſentiments of divines in op-
ion to this doctrine of mental imagery, or imaginary ideas of
ſt as man. Though I know none that ever directly treated
ıis ſubject, and I know not if ever any had occaſion to do ſo
ıow, that ſuch ſtrange doctrine is introduced and intermixed
divinity; yet there are many inſtances of incidental diſcour-
beſides what I have already given,) or occaſional teſtimonies
e writings of divines, againſt all imagery, internal as well as
·nal, in religion. Some of the inſtances ſuitable, I think, to
reſent ſubject, are theſe following; to which I may add alſo
entiment of philoſophers; and therefore ſhall divide this
ter into two *ſections*, one treating this matter as a point of
ity, the other as a point of *philoſophy*.

SECT. I.

begin with the mind of *divines* upon this ſubject. Dr. Owen,
ıe Spirit, p. 151. ſays, " The *utter neglect* of learning the
vledge of Chriſt, and of the truth as it is in him is not more
icious unto the ſouls of men, than is the learning of it by *un-
neans*, whereby *falſe* and *miſchievious ideas* or repreſentations
ım are infuſed into the minds of men. The papiſts would
ı and teach him by *images*, the work of men's hands, and teach-
ıf Lies.—They are in themſelves ſuited only to ingenerate low
carnal thoughts in depaved ſuperſtitious minds —The appre-
ions which they can have hereby, tend but to the *knowing Chriſt
the fleſh*; which the apoſtle looked on as no part of his du-
2 Cor. v. 16. But the glory of the human nature as united
ı the perſon of the Son of God, and engaged in the diſcharge
is office of Mediator, conſiſts alone in theſe eminent peculiar
able communications of the Spirit of God unto him, and his
erful operations in him. This is repreſented to us in the glaſs
ıe goſpel; which we beholding by faith, *are changed into the
e image*, by the *ſame Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 18."

low far the human nature of Chriſt, as it is the proper object
ı, tranſcends mere natural reaſon and underſtanding, and far
e all imaginary ideas, is lively expreſſed, and further explain-
ıy the ſame author, on the *perſon of Chriſt*, p. 14. where he hath
e words: " The prevention of that nature from any ſubſiſ-
:e of its own, by its aſſumption into perſonal union with the
of God in the firſt inſtance of its conception, is that which is
ve all miracles, nor can be deſigned by that name. A myſtery
, ſo far above the order of all creating or providential opera-
ıs, that it wholly tranſcends the ſphere of them that are moſt

miraculous. Herein did God glorify all the properties of the divine nature, acting in a way of infinite wisdom, grace, and condescension. All other things were produced and effected by an outward emanation of power from God: *He said, Let there be light, and there was light.* But this assumption of our nature into a hypostatical union with the Son of God, this constitution of one and the same individual person in two natures, so infinitely distinct, as those of God and man, whereby the Eternal was made in time, the Infinite became finite, the Immortal, mortal, yet continuing eternal, infinite, immortal, is that singular expression of divine wisdom, goodness, and power, wherein God will be admired and glorified unto all eternity, &c." Page 15. "In the expression of this mystery the scripture doth sometimes draw the vail over it, as that which we cannot look into.—This glorious *Word*, which is God, and is described by his eternity, and omnipotency in works of creation and providence, *was made flesh*; which expresseth the lowest state and condition of human *nature. Without controversy great is this mystery of godliness.* And in that state wherein he visible appeared as *so* made *flesh*, those who had eyes, given them from above, saw his *glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* The eternal *Word* being made flesh and manifested therein, they saw *his glory.*" Page 17. "The faith of this mystery ennobles the mind wherein it is, rendering it spiritual and heavenly, transforming it into the image of God. Herein consists the excellency of faith, above all other powers and acts of the soul, that it receives, assents unto, and rests in things in their own nature absolutely incomprehensible. It is ἔλεγχος ὰ βλεπομένων, Heb. xi. 1. *The evidence of things not seen;* that which makes evident as by demonstration, these things which are no way objected unto sense, and which reason cannot comprehend. The more sublime and glorious, the more inaccessible unto sense and reason are the things which we believe, the more are we changed into the image of God, in the exercise of faith upon them." Page 18. "This glory which we behold, 2 Cor. iii. 18. is the glory of the face of God in Christ, or the glorious representation which is made of him in the person of Christ. The glass wherein this glory is represented unto us, proposed unto our view and contemplation, is divine revelation in the gospel. Herein we behold it alone, by faith alone." Page 31. "In all the revelations that ever God made of himself, his mind and will, he always laid this practice of *making representations of him* under the most severe interdict and prohibition. And this he did,—because nothing that can fall into the invention and imagination of man, could make any other but *false representations* of him, and so substitute an *idol* in his place." Page 103. "*Many* there are who, not comprehending, nor being affected with *that divine* spiritual description of the person of Christ which is *given us by* the Holy Ghost in scripture, do feign unto themselves

life representations of him by images and pictures, so as to excite carnal and corrupt affections in their minds. By the help of their outward senses, they reflect on their imaginations the shape of a human body, cast into postures or circumstances dolorous or triumphant; and so, by the working of their fancy, raise a *commotion* of mind in themselves, which they suppose to be love unto Christ. But all these idols are *teachers of lies*. The true beauty and amiableness of the person of Christ, which is the formal object and cause of divine love, is so far from being represented herein, as that the mind is thereby *wholly diverted* from the contemplation of it: *For no more can be so pictured unto us but what may belong unto a mere man, and what is arbitrarily referred unto Christ, not by faith, but by corrupt imagination. The beauty of the person of Christ as represented in the scripture, consists in things invisible unto the eyes of flesh. They are such as no hand of man can represent or shadow. It is the eye of faith alone that can see this King in his beauty.* What else can contemplate on the uncreated glories of his *divine nature?* Can the hand of man represent the union of his natures in the same person, wherein he is peculiarly amiable? What eye can discern the mutual communication of the properties of his different natures in the same person which depends thereon, whence it is that God laid down his life for us, and purchased his church with his own blood? In these things, O vain man! doth the loveliness of the person of Christ unto the souls of believers consist; and not in those strokes of art which fancy hath guided a skilful hand and pencil unto. And what eye of flesh can discern the inhabitation of the Spirit in all fulness in the *human nature?* Can his condescension, his love, his grace, his power, his compassion, his offices, his fitness and ability to save sinners, be decyphered on a tablet, or engraven on wood or stone? However such pictures may be adorned, however beautified and enriched, they are not that Christ which the soul of the spouse doth love; they are not any means of representing his love unto us, or of conveying our love unto him. They only divert the minds of superstitious persons from the Son of God, unto the embraces of a *cloud composed of fancy and imagination.*" Page 62. "The person of Christ is the object of divine worship and honour. The formal object and reason hereof is the divine nature, and its essential infinite excellency.—Those who denying that nature in him, do yet pretend to worship him with divine and religious adoration, *do but worship a golden calf of their own setting up: For a Christ who is not over all God blessed for ever, is not better.* And it implies a contradiction, that any creature should, on any account, be the immediate proper object of divine worship, unless the divine essential excellencies be communicated unto it, or transfused *unto it*; whereby it would cease to be a creature."

; The fame author, on the *glory of Chriſt*, p. *(miki)* 42. "The eternal fire of the divine nature dwells in the bush frail nature, yet is not conſumed thereby. God dwells i buſh. And, by the direction given unto Moſes to put ſhoes, we are taught to caſt away all *fleſhly imaginations* a nal affections, that by pure acts of faith we may behold th ry." Page 46. "To behold it, is not a work of fancy or i ation. It is not converſing with an image framed by the man *without*, or that of our own fancy *within*, but of fa erciſed on divine revelation." Pa e 49. "The ſcripture only glaſs wherein we may behold the glory of Chriſt. the glory of the ſcripture, that it is th great, yea the onl ward means of repreſenting unto us the glory of Chriſt. 94. 95. "This is that glory whereof we ought to endea proſpect by faith; *by faith*, I ſay, *not by imagination.* Va foolish men, having general notions of this glory of knowing nothing of the real nature of it, have endeavou repreſent it in pictures and images, with all that luſt beauty which the art of painting with ornaments of go jewels can give them. This is that repreſentation of the glory of Chriſt, which, being made and propoſed unto t ginations and carnal affections of ſuperſtitious perſons, ſuch a ſhew of devotion and veneration in the Papal c But they err, not knowing the ſcriptures, nor the eterna of the Son of God. The glory that the Lord Jeſus Chri the real, actual poſſeſſion of in heaven, can be no otherwi or apprehended in this world, but in the light of faith, fix ſelf on divine revelation. *To behold this glory of Chriſt, is act of fancy or imagination. It does not conſiſt in fancying ſelves the ſhape of a glorious perſon in heaven. But the ſtead ciſe of faith on the revelation and deſcription made of this g Chriſt in the ſcripture*, is the grand rule and meaſure of all meditations thereon.—Every pretence of a deſire of heave of the preſence of Chriſt therein, that does not ariſe fron is not reſolved into that proſpect which we have of the gl Chriſt in this world by faith, is mere *fancy and imagin* P. 139. "Faith and ſight are the two ſpiritual powers of t the one in this life, the one in that which is to come. Th of them both is the glory of Chriſt." Page 141. "A ſha image of this glory of Chriſt is drawn in the goſpel: And it be obſcure and imperfect in compariſon of his own real ſ tial glory, which is the object of viſion in heaven; yet it only image and repreſentation of himſelf which he hath given unto us in this world. That woful curſed inven *framing images* of him out of ſtocks and ſtones, however ac *or repreſentations* of him by the art of painting, are ſo ſa *repreſenting* to the mind of man any thing of his real glo

nothing can be more effectual to divert their thoughts and apprehensions from it." P. 147. "When Christ was transfigured on the mount, and had on his human nature some reflections of his divine glory, his disciples that were with him were rather amazed, than refreshed by it, Matth. xvii. 4. They saw his glory, but spoke thereon they knew not what, Luke ix. 30, 33. And the reason hereof was, because no man in this life can have a visible power, either spiritual or corporeal, directly and immediately to behold the real glory of Christ. Should the Lord Jesus appear now to any of us in his majesty and glory, it would not be unto our edification and consolation; for we are not meet nor able, by the power of any light or grace that we have received or can receive, to bear the immediate appearance and representation of them." P. 148. "Those who dream of his personal reign on earth before the day of judgment, unless they suppose that all the saints shall be perfectly glorified also, (which is only to bring down heaven to earth for a while to no purpose,) provide not at all for the edification and consolation of the church. And how much more abominable is the folly of men, who would represent the Lord Christ in his present glory by pictures and images of him? When they have done their utmost with their burnishing glasses and gildings, an eye of *flesh* can not only behold it, but, if it be guided by *reason*, see it contemptible and foolish. But the true glory of Christ neither inward nor outward sight can bear the rays of in this life. The dispensation which we are meet for, is only that of his presence with us by the Spirit: *We know him no more after the flesh.* We are advanced above that way and means of the knowledge of him by the flesh, carnal ordinances of the Old Testament, &c. Therefore he tells his disciples, but it was *expedient for them that he should go away, and send the Spirit to them*, John xvi. 7. Hereon they had a clearer view of the glory of Christ, than they could have by beholding him in the flesh. This is our spiritual posture and condition: We are left the knowledge of him according to the flesh. We cannot attain nor receive the sight of him in glory; but the life that we now lead, is by the *faith* of the Son of God." P. 166, 167, 168, 169. "This transforming effect from the spiritual view of Christ as proposed in the gospel, being lost as unto any experience of it in the minds of men, carnal, and ignorant of the mystery of believing, (as it is at present derided, though it be the life of religion) fancy and superstition provided various supplies in the room of it; for they found out crucifixes and images with paintings, to represent him in his sufferings and glory. By these things their carnal affections being excited by their outward senses, they suppose themselves to be affected with him, and to be like unto him. Nor have they proceeded so far as, either by arts diabolical, or

by other means, to make an appearance of wounds in their hands and feet, and sides; therein pretending to be like him, yea to be wholly conformed unto his image. *But that which is produced by an image, is but an image. An imaginary Christ will affect nothing in the minds of men but imaginary grace*, &c. However, there is a general supposition granted on all hands, namely, that there must be a view of Christ and his glory to cause us to love him, and thereby to make us conformable and like unto him. But here lies the difference: Those of the church of Rome say, that this must be done by the beholding of a crucifix, with other images and pictures of him, and that with our bodily eyes: We say it is by beholding his glory by faith as revealed in the gospel, and no otherwise. And, to confess the truth, we have some who as they reject the use of images, so they despise that spiritual view of the glory of Christ which we inquire after. Such persons on the first occasion will fall on the other side; for any thing is better than nothing, &c. If an idolater should plead as they do all, that in the beholding of the image of Christ they find their affections unto him greatly excited, increased, and inflamed, (so they will be, Isa. lvii. 5. *inflaming themselves with idols;*) and that hereupon he endeavours to be like unto him; what shall we have to oppose thereunto? for it is certain, that such images are apt to make impressions on the minds of men, partly from the *readiness* of the *senses and imagination to give them admittance into their thoughts*, and partly from their natural inclinations unto superstition, their *aversion from things spiritual and invisible*, with an inclination unto things present and visible. Hence, among them who are satisfied that they ought not to be adored with any religious veneration; yet some are apt, upon the sight of them, to entertain a thoughtful reverence, as they would do, if they were to enter into a Pagan temple full of idols, &c. But that they do sensibly affect the minds of men carnal and superstitious, cannot be denied; and so they suppose it is a love unto Christ himself. However, certain it is in general, and confessed on all hands, that the beholding of Christ is the most blessed means of exciting all our graces, spiritualising all our affections, and transforming our minds into his likeness. And, if we have not another and a more excellent way of beholding him, then they have who behold him, as they suppose, in images and crucifixes, they would seem to have the advantage of us: For their minds will be really affected with somewhat, ours with nothing at all. And, by the pretence thereof, they inveigle the carnal affections of men, ignorant of the power of the gospel, to become their proselytes; for having lived, it may be, a long time without any the least experience of a *sensible impression* on their minds, or the transforming power *from the representation* of Christ in the gospel, upon their very

firſt devout religious application to theſe images they find their thoughts exerciſed, their minds affected, and ſome preſent change made upon them. But there is a difference between the perſon of David, and *an image with a bolſter of goat's hair*; though one were laid in the room and place of the other. And there is ſo between Chriſt and an image; though the one be put in the place of the other. Neither do theſe things ſerve unto any other end, but to divert the minds of men from faith and love to Chriſt; giving them ſome ſuch ſatisfaction in the room of them, as that their carnal affections do cleave unto their idols. And indeed it does belong unto the wiſdom of faith, and we ſtand in need of ſpiritual light, to diſcern and judge between the workings of natural affections towards ſpiritual objects, on undue motives, by undue means, with indirect ends, wherein all Papal devotions conſiſt; and the ſpiritual exerciſe of grace in thoſe affections duly fixed on ſpiritual objects. But, as was ſaid, it is a real experience of the efficacy that there is in the ſpiritual beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith, as propoſed in the goſpel, to ſtrengthen, increaſe, and excite all grace unto its proper exerciſe, as changing and conforming the ſoul gradually into his likeneſs, which muſt ſecure us againſt all theſe pretences." P. 179. "Where light leaves the affections behind, it ends in formality or Atheiſm; and where affections outrun light, they ſink into the bog of ſuperſtition, doting on images, pictures, or the like." P. 190. "We have no propoſal of the glory of Chriſt unto us by viſion, or illuſtrious appearances of his perſon, as Iſaiah had of old, chap. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4. or as John had in the Revelation, chap. i. verſe 13, 14, 15, 16. We need it not; it would be of no advantage to us: For, as to the aſſurance of faith, we have a word of prophecy more uſeful to us than a voice from heaven, 2 Pet. i. 17, 18, 19, &c. And as we have no ſuch external propoſals of his glory unto us in viſions, ſo neither have we any new revelation of him by immediate inſpiration. We can ſee nothing of it, know nothing of it, but what is propoſed unto us in ſcripture; and that as it is propoſed, &c." P. 192. "Some ſuppoſe, that by chopping, gilding, and painting, they can make any image of Chriſt that ſhall perfectly repreſent him to their ſenſes and carnal affections from head to foot. But they feed on aſhes, and have a lie in their right hands: Jeſus Chriſt is evidently crucified before our eyes in the ſcripture, Gal. iii. 1. ſo alſo is he evidently exalted and glorified therein. And it is the wiſdom of faith, to gather into one theſe parcelled deſcriptions that are given of him, that they may be the object of its view and contemplation."

Somewhat ſimilar to the paſſages above, are the words of Burgeſs in his *Spiritual Refinings*, p. 279. ſhewing how much to be ſuſpected *that religion* is that affects the ſenſes and imaginations, *and touches the affections*, without duly enlightening the mind

"What can be thought the reaſon [ſays he] of ſo many ap from the hopeful beginnings of grace which ſeemed in but this: Only their affections were wrought upon; th great grief, great fear and terror upon their conſcience little or very weak workings upon their judgments. The we miniſters of God think not this any ſuch great mat ſtir up in you new griefs, new ſorrows, new fears. Alas water will ſoon be dried up.—Fear all theſe affections of and ſorrow, and terror that are in thee; being but affe and not the fruit of an enlightened judgment, will quick niſh away: And as rotten fruit falls to the ground befor ripe, ſo will all theſe affections decay, before they come maturity, that flow not from a ſanctified underſtanding. D ſay, God begins orderly; he firſt works in the underſta and by that moves and excites the affections: But the dev firſt moves the affections, and by them he perverteth an rupteth the underſtanding. Thus he propoundeth to Eve was good to the eye, and pleaſant to the taſte, thereby ſnare the affections; and by that means blinded her jud Therefore the apoſtle commands Timothy to *reprove with a trine*, 2 Tim. iv. 2. To make men afraid and tremble abo when by good and ſound doctrine they are not informed foulneſs and guilt of it, will never hold." To this p are the words of *Tertullian advers. Valentinum*, cited by Da *in Col. p.* 222. *Habent artificium impoſtores, quo prius p deant quam edoceant: veritas autem docendo perſuadet, non f ſio docet*: i. e. *The artifice of deceivers or impoſters is, to pe before they teach: But truth teaches not by perſuading, bu ſuades by teaching.* Theſe two laſt citations deſerve to b ſidered with relation to the effects of that doctrine that ſtrikes the imaginations, tickles the fancy, ſtirs the affe or moves the paſſions, yet, leaves the mind and judgment clouds of darkneſs and ignorance. But I return to paſſa the former ſort,

Ridgley in his *Body of Divinity*, vol. II. p. 257, ſays, farther inquired, Whether we may not deſcribe our Savio he ſometimes is by the Papiſts, in thoſe things that reſpe human nature?—To this we anſwer, That whatever of comes within the reach of the art of man to delienate o cribe, is only his human nature; which is not the object vine adoration: And therefore this rather tends to debaſe, give us raiſed and becoming conceptions of him as ſuch." I. p. 394. "Had it [the human nature of Chriſt] bee formed, and then united to the divine nature, it would ha *a proper ſubſiſtence* of its own; but, ſince it was no *perſonality* conſidered as united to the ſecond Perſon *God-head, is* contained therein, tho' its properties are in

diſtinct from it" Page 406. "If the nature that obeyed and ſuffered had been a human perſon, his obedience and ſufferings could not have been of infinite value, or accepted by God as a ſufficient price of redemption; for they could not have had this value reflected on them, had they not been the works of a divine perſon. And thoſe rays of divine glory that ſhined forth in his human nature, could have no immediate relation to it, had it been a diſtinct perſon from that of his Godhead.

"It is farther obſerved, that thoſe works which were performed by him in each nature, are to be relied on by us as the works of the whole perſon. This reliance contains in it an inſtance of adoration; and ſuppoſes the perſon who performs them to be God; which he was not in his human nature. Therefore we are apt to adore our Mediator, and rely on the works performed by him in his human nature, as he is God and man in one perſon. As we have ſufficient ground from ſcripture to conclude, that the Mediator is the object of divine adoration; ſo we are to depend on him as a divine perſon for ſalvation: And our worſhip herein does not terminate on his human nature, but on his Deity." Page 131. "And indeed his divine perſonality is the only foundation of his right to be adored." How oppoſite to all theſe expreſſions is the doctrine of the neceſſity and helpfulneſs of imaginary ideas, reſpecting Chriſt's human nature as a corporeal object, and yet an object of faith?

Dr. Owen, on *Communion with each Perſon*, p. 230. ſays, "By the grace of his perſon, I underſtand not the outward appearance of his human nature, neither when he converſed here on earth, bearing our infirmities;—concerning which ſome of the ancients were very poetical in their expreſſions; nor yet as now exalted in glory; a vain imagination whereof makes many bear a falſe, a corrupted reſpect unto Chriſt, even upon carnal apprehenſions of the mighty exaltation of the human nature; which is but to *know Chriſt after the fleſh*, 2 Cor. v. 19. A miſchief much improved by the abomination of fooliſh imagery."

To this purpoſe we may ſee the mind of the divines, the authors of the *Morning Exerciſes*, vol. III. p. 423, 424. "The ſchoolmen have concluded, [to which I find our learned and pious divines * have given their aſſent,] That the eſſence of the Godhead is the proper and primary object of worſhip. This divine eſſence is wholly in Chriſt, Col. ii. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.*—And as God manifeſted to them (that were under the law) in the temple, ſo God manifeſted to us in Chriſt, is the proper object of worſhip to us. The fleſh or humanity of Chriſt is the *medium* or mean by which we have acceſs to God in all our worſhip. This is expreſſed Heb. x. 19, 20, *Having*

* *Dr. Owen on Communion* with the Holy Ghoſt, chap. 8. p. 405.

ing boldneſs by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way which he hath conſecrated for us through the vail; that is to ſay, his fleſh. By the fleſh of Chriſt here, I do underſtand his *natural fleſh* barely conſidered, as ſuch, but in that notion, as it is to be underſtood, John vi. 53, 54, 55, 56. where Chriſt ſpeaks of eating his fleſh and drinking his blood unto life. Where Chriſt's fleſh (by a *metonymy* of the cauſe for the effect) ſignifies the righteouſneſs, ſatisfaction, reconciliation, grace, peace, glory, Chriſt procured for us, by the obedience he performed to God in that fleſh. By the fleſh of Chriſt in this ſenſe we have acceſs to God in all our worſhip. Yet is not the conſideration of Chriſt's natural fleſh altogether uſeleſs unto this end? For whereas we are apt to frame images and ſimilitudes of God in our minds, the *right apprehenſions of God, dwelling in the human nature of Chriſt*, (who is the true image of the inviſible God,) may be effectual to remove all other images and likeneſſes of God out of our minds. But then we muſt be careful, that we do not terminate our conceptions of God in the *man* Chriſt, or in the *manhood* of Chriſt; for then we ſhall make the human nature of Chriſt the image of the Godhead; and that would be an *idol*. But, when we have taken up an apprehenſion of the humanity of Chriſt, if our conceptions paſs through the vail into the holieſt, if we are led thereby to worſhip that Godhead that dwells in it, this is a right conception and true worſhip."

The paſſage in Dr. Owen cited in that above one, is in theſe words: "It is, and that not without ground, denied by the ſchoolmen, that the formal reaſon and object of divine worſhip is in the perſons preciſely conſidered; that is, under the formally conſtitutive reaſon of their perſonality, which is their relation to each other: But this belongs to the divine nature and eſſence, and to their diſtinct perſons, as they are identified with the eſſence itſelf. Hence is that way of praying to the Trinity, by the repetition of the ſame petition to the ſeveral perſons, as in the Litany, groundleſs, if not impious. It ſuppoſeth, that one perſon is worſhipped, and not another, when each perſon is worſhipped as God, and each perſon is ſo, &c. The proper and peculiar object of divine worſhip and invocation is, the eſſence of God, in its infinite excellency, dignity, majeſty, and its cauſality, as the firſt ſovereign cauſe of all things. Now, this is common to all the three perſons, and is proper to each of them, not formally, as a perſon, but as God bleſſed for ever. All adoration reſpects that which is common to all; ſo that in each act of adoration and worſhip all are adored and worſhipped." To this purpoſe Mr. John Brown, on Prayer, from *page 134.* ſays, "We would beware to conceive of this one *God and three* perſons under any ſhape or idea, becauſe he is an *object purely* ſpiritual and inviſible.—He is infinitely above all

our thoughts.—We would beware, even in our thoughts and imaginations, to divide the object of our worship.—Particularly, we would beware to imagine, that, when we are praying to the Mediator, we are only giving to him a peculiar and middle kind of worship, inferior to that which is due to God, and not the same; for then we should necessarily grant, that he were not the true and living God, or that his taking on the relation and work of a Mediator, did degrade him as to his Deity: Which were impious and false.—For it is the person we pray to; and this person is God. Though in him the human nature is inseparably united unto the divine nature; yet the human nature doth not subsist of itself, but in the Godhead of the Son, to make it now hypostatically united; so that the person is but one, &c. Therefore, because Christ who is true man is true God, and as to his person is God, we would beware, in our worshipping of him, to make any precision or abstraction, in our minds, of his human nature from his divine nature, as if one were to be worshipped, and not the other: For our worship must be directed to the person; and this person is one, and is God. And here we can make no abstraction or precision as to the object worshipped; but must consider Christ as one person, though consisting of two natures. And we must consider this one person as God, because so it is, and the human nature consisteth in and by the Godhead, and not of itself; and therefore maketh no alteration in the person, the object of worship." Here by the by, it may be remarked, that in opposition to this sound doctrine. Mr. Robe's imaginary idea of Christ as man is in its nature a prescinding and abstracting idea. It can go no farther than the notion of Christ's human body: It cannot so much as conceive of Christ's human nature as such, or as it is an intellectual creature, according to the words of Augustine*, as cited at the foot of the page: "The soul is the image of that whereof it is capable and can be a partaker: but the sensitive power, seeing it knows by a material and sensible organ, is no way ordained for this purpose, than it can possibly know intellectual creatures." Now, though this seems also to be Mr. Robe's opinion according to his definition of the objects of imaginary ideas; and though it is only by an intellectual idea there can be such a precision and abstraction, as Mr. Brown speaks of above, which yet is the very thing he so justly condemns; and though Mr. Robe's prescinding by an imaginary idea seems to be much more condemnable: Yet he even inculcates the necessity of that imaginary precision and abstraction,

* Aug. de anima dicit, Eo ipso est imago ejus, quo capax ejus est, ejusque esse particeps potest: virtus autem sensitive, cum per organum materiale & sensibile cognoscat, nullo modo ordinatur ad hoc, ut cognoscere possit intellectuales creaturas. De Trin. c. 8.

by making this imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, the firſt thing neceſſary, and then the underſtanding muſt go forward, to conceive in another manner: ſo that the firſt conception, being without underſtanding, cannot but preſcind from the perſon and Godhead of Chriſt. Whereas the doctrine of faith teaches otherwiſe; and the grace of faith only can take up the glorious perſon that is the object of faith and worſhip. Mr. Durham on Rev. i. concerning the object of worſhip, p. *(mihi)* 7. ſays, "Divine worſhip is given to Chriſt as he is God, and becauſe he is God.—When this worſhip is given to him, *it is* given to the perſon who is Mediator, and that in one individual act; for he is God is not worſhipped one way, and as man another way, nor is there a diviſion of his natures to be conceived: But the perſon who is man is worſhipped with this divine honour, in the ſame act, became he is God." To teach the neceſſity of that imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, which cannot apprehend him to be God, and to make the object of that idea, to be the object of faith, ſeems equal to that mental idolatry of making ſome corporeal repreſentation of him who is the inviſible God; to which the minds of all men are ſo naturally prone, and even the minds of the moſt exerciſed chriſtians, as Mr. Andrew Gray ſays, in his *Communion Sermons*, p. 126. "A chriſtian ſometimes in his enjoyments falls into the ſin of idolatry. Is it not ſo when ye are neareſt God? Ye ſtudy to bring down God in ſome viſible ſhape or idea, that ſo that viſible ſhape of God may provoke fear. And this is damnable idolatry, transforming the inviſible God into the image of a viſible thing."

To this purpoſe Mr. Thomas Boſton, in his *Fourfold State*, *Edinb. edit.* 1735. *p.* 56. hath theſe words: "Doth not the carnal mind naturally ſtrive to graſp ſpiritual things in *imagination*, as if the ſoul were quite immerſed in fleſh and blood, and would turn every thing into its own ſhape? Let men who are uſed to the forming of the moſt abſtracted notions, look into their own ſouls, and they ſhall find this bias in their minds: Whereof the idolatry which did of old, and ſtill doth ſo much prevail in the world, is an unconteſtible evidence. For it plainly diſcovers, that men naturally have a *viſible Deity*, and *ſee* what they worſhip: *And therefore they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man*, &c. Rom. i. 23. The reformation of theſe nations (bleſſed be the Lord for it) hath baniſhed idolatry and images too out of our churches: But heart reformation only can break down *mental* idolatry, and baniſh the moſt ſubtle and refined image-worſhip, and repreſentations of the Deity, out of the minds of men. The world in the time of its darkneſs *was never more* prone to the former than the unſanctified mind *is to the latter.* And hence are horrible, monſtrous, and miſtaken *thoughts of* God, Chriſt, the glory above, and all ſpiritual things."

Biſhop Burnet, however erroneous and heterodox in ſeveral other points, yet, as a perſon of known learning and great abilities, may here be quoted as giving his mind in a very ſound, ſolid and orthodox manner on this ſubject, in his book, intitled, *An expoſition of the thirty nine articles of the church of England, Art.* 22. *Edinb. edit. p.* 352. Where ſpeaking of the idolatry of the church of Rome, he ſays, "The Papiſts pretend there is an uſefulneſs in outward figures, to raiſe the mind by the ſenſes to juſt apprehenſions of ſpiritual objects. But [ſays he] the effect is quite contrary to the pretence: For, inſtead of raiſing the mind by the ſenſes, the mind is rather ſunk by them into groſs ideas." He adds, The bias of human nature lies to ſenſe, and to form groſs imaginations of incorporeal objects: And therefore, inſtead of gratifying theſe, we ought to wean our minds from them and to raiſe them above them all we can. Even men of ſpeculation and abſtraction feel nature in this grows too hard for them: But the vulgar is apt to fall ſo headlong into theſe conceits, that it looks like the laying of ſnares for them, to furniſh them with ſuch methods and helps for their having groſs thoughts of ſpiritual objects.

To this purpoſe alſo Mr Fraſer of Brea, on faith, p. 156, 157, 158, 159 ſpeaks of "ſuch as come to, and cloſe with a Chriſt and idol of their own fancy; and it is thus: When men hear tell of Chriſt, the idolatry of the *carnal mind* doth preſently form a kind of carnal image of Chriſt in its own fancy, and falls down and worſhips, and believes this idol thus fancied, Hoſ xiii. 2. Acts xvii. 29.—Their imagination formeth ſome idea of him, to what the *idolatrous* carnal mind doth aſſimilate him; which idea is all they have for Chriſt. Verily, when Chriſt is externally revealed, there muſt be a glorious light to diſcover Chriſt, as he is in himſelf; which light is from God alone, and a ſupernatural work, and beginning of all ſaving differencing good, and which diſcovers Chriſt to the ſoul really; that is, makes the ſoul ſee Chriſt as he is, though imperfectly, yet truly, not only as he is man, but as he is God-man; the glorious beams of the Godhead breaking through, and appearing in the face of Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 6. as he is *full of grace and truth*, and glory, ſo as the ſoul cannot but cleave and adhere to, and truſt on him: They that *know thy name, will put their truſt in thee*, and love, joy and glory in him only, and above all Whereas this idolatrous apprehenſion of Chriſt, is a mere dead fancy, and is lifeleſs, (like external idols;) doth *not tranſform the ſoul into the ſame image*, nor rejoice the ſoul, but the ſoul continueth in the ſame caſe it was. And *as they are affected* with Chriſt, ſo with every other

thing, with God, with death, hell, heaven, with ſin, and other ſpiritual matters, which *the natural man cannot conceive, becauſe ſpiritually diſcerned.* But as a blind man who never ſaw, doth colours, ſo it forms its own apprehenſion of theſe things, and ſees them in its carnal light, which miſapprehends every thing, and conceive not truly of things as they are in themſelves; and hence doth not affect the heart ſuitably, becauſe they are not real, but painted fancies. Now, this ſpiritual light which diſcovers Chriſt, hell, wrath and ſin, really as they are, is the firſt ſpiritual and fundamental difference between a truly godly man, *to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed,* and another carnal man, tho' never otherwiſe ſo well qualified. And as this light doth ſpring out of darkneſs, 2 Cor iv. 6. ſo, when it ſhines, and diſcovers ſpiritual objects, it makes the ſoul ſee its former blindneſs. And, till this marvellous light of glory ſhine in ſome meaſure into thy ſoul, thou art but a ſtranger unto the kingdom of God, and work of grace; and night and day, whenever thou makeſt thy addreſs to God or Chriſt, art guilty of ſpiritual idolatry, worſhipping that idol of thy own framing. And hence John vi 40 *ſeeing of the Son and believing on him,* are joined together. Which ſeeing of Chriſt is the gift of God, as faith is; and is ſo far above the natural man, that he cannot ſee, more than the ſtone-blind man can behold what is before him. This is the form of knowledge which many have, Rom. ii. 20. And hence folk talk of what they underſtand n , and affirm of what they know not 1 Tim i. 7."

The ſame may be ſaid of a mental image, or an imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, that Dr. Owen (on *the perſon of Chriſt,* p. 168.) ſays of an outward image repreſenting Chriſt in glory: "What is there in it that hath the leaſt reſpect thereunto, the leaſt likeneſs of it? Nay, is it not the moſt effectual means that can be deviſed to divert the minds of men from true and real apprehenſion of it? Doth it teach any thing of the ſubſiſtence of the human nature of Chriſt in the perſon of the Son of God? Nay, doth it not obliterate all thoughts of it? What is repreſented thereby of the union of it unto God, and the immediate communications of God unto it? Doth it declare the manifeſtation of all the glorious properties of the divine nature of him? One thing indeed they aſcribe unto it that is proper unto Chriſt, namely, that it is to be adored and worſhipped. [or, I may add, made an object of faith;] whereby they add idolatry to their folly. Perſons who know *not what it is* to live by faith, whoſe minds are never raiſed by *ſpiritually* heavenly contemplations, who have no deſign in

religion but to gratify their inward superstition by their outward senses, may be pleased for a time, and ruined for ever by these delusions." The same author, (p. 164) is so far from thinking men may have an imaginary idea of Christ as man, as we may have of other men, that he thus speaks of Christ's human nature: "The eternal subsistence of that nature of his in the person of the Son of God, as this belongs unto its dignity and honour, so it doth also unto its inherent glory. This is and shall be eternally peculiar unto him, in distinction from, and exaltation above the whole creation of God, angels and men.—Some inquire, whether the saints in heaven do perfectly comprehend the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God? I do not well understand what is meant by perfectly comprehend But this is certain, that what is now by faith, we shall have there by sight.—No finite creature can have an absolute comprehension of that which is infinite We shall never search out the Almighty in any of his works of infinite wisdom. Wherefore this only I shall say, there is such a satisfactory evidence in heaven, not only of the truth, but also of *the nature of this mystery*, as that the glory of Christ therein is manifest, as an eternal object of divine adoration and honour.—Farther our thoughts cannot attain This is that wherein the glory of the human nature of Christ doth essentially excel and differ from that of any other blessed creature whatever."

Faith and fancy are (if I may thus express it) so incoalescible or unmixable, and their objects so different, that Mr. Robe, in attempting to make Christ's human nature as it is corporeal to be the object of faith, has debased it so far, as to make it, not the object of rational knowledge, but only of a mere sensitive imaginary idea. Hence, p. 31. and many other places, he makes his conceiving of Christ as true and real man to be what he calls the imaginary idea of him; and then he makes the conceiving of his Godhead and personality, acts of the understanding. By which means he makes the conceiving of Christ as true and real man, no proper act of the understanding, but merely of sense and fancy. At this rate the human body of Christ is sunk below the dignity of any other human body living: For of it such an intellectual view may be taken, that any man may say of the make and frame thereof, as Psal. cxxxix. 14, 15: *I am fearfully and wonderfully made. My substance* (or body, as in the margin) *was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.* How absurd were it to make all this only the *object of an imaginary* idea, because the contemplation of *his curious piece of* divine workmanship cannot take place

according to Mr. Robe, without one's forming in his brain the image of that ſubſtance in the condition it was in when an embryo, and before it ſaw the light, and which the fancy may take liberty to conceive of formed or not formed, monſtrous or not ſo, according to the pleaſure of fancies? One might bluſh to think, that any man's reaſon is ſo immerſed in ſenſe, as to bring in upon this ſubject that ſenſitive image which neceſſarily diverts the mind from the former rational and religious conſideration, and to denominate the whole from, I need not ſay, the leaſt and worſt part, but from that which is no part at all of the foreſaid conſideration, namely, the dead image of a corporeal ſubſtance in his head.

But now, if a man's own body may, as in the above inſtance, be the object of a rational and intellectual view, and yet the human nature and body of Chriſt be only (according to Mr. Robe's expreſſions) the object of an imaginary idea, then a man might ſee more excellency in his own, than he can ſee in the human nature or body of Chriſt; though yet there was never a creature in heaven or earth ſo fearfully and wonderfully made, nor was there ever a ſubſtance ſo curiouſly wrought as the human nature of Chriſt by the power of the Holy Ghoſt: And yet, being but a creature, never was, nor will be the proper object of faith or worſhip, but as and becauſe it is perſonally united to, and ſubſiſteth in the eternal Λόγος, the Word that was made fleſh. How dreadfully then is the human nature of Chriſt debaſed, and this glorious myſtery trampled under foot, by making that curious piece of God's wonderful workmanſhip the object of any man's fancy or imaginary idea; which, as I have ſaid, is no part of rational knowledge? But, as none can think rightly of Chriſt's human nature abſtract from the great myſtery of his incarnation, and the aſſumption of that nature into his own divine perſonality, in which alone it ſubſiſts; ſo there can be no religious conception of it but by faith: It is otherwiſe both inconceivable and unutterable "It is ſaid by the Prophet, not only with reſpect to the divine eſſence of the Son of God, but alſo with reſpect to his human nature, *Who ſhall declare his generation?* Iſa liii. 8 For that both theſe ſubſtances or natures ſhould meet in one perſon, if faith do not believe, words cannot explain*" This is ſtill true of Chriſt's human nature, it is a continued myſtery, and will be ſo for ever.

* Quia in Chriſto Ieſu, Filio Dei, non ſolum ad divinam eſſentiam, ſed etiam ad humanam ſpectat naturam, quod dictam eſt per prophetam, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit?* Utramque enim ſubſtantiam in unam convenire perſonam, niſi fides credat, ſermo non explicat. *Leo, ſerm.* 9. *de natiu.*

How far from being the proper object of an imaginary idea that human nature of Christ, under the vestment whereof he could in his humble state say, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me*, John xiv. 11. and again, *I and my Father are one?* John x. 30. On which a christian poet has an excellent comment, as at the foot of the page*. Where he wittily and wisely both, from the word *unus*, ONE, refutes the Arians, who denied the equality of the three persons in the unity of the Godhead; and from the word *sumus*, ARE, refutes the *Sabellians*, who deny the distinction of the persons in the Trinity, and made them all one, or but three names or offices. This poet lived about the year 430. And many of the schoolmen after him made use of the same manner of distinction which he points at by the words, *qui* and *quod*; while they shew in the holy Trinity there is not *aliud atque aliud*, because the essence is one; yet there is *alius atque alius*, because the persons are three. But in Christ there is *aliud atque aliud*, not in point of parts, but in point of number, for his natures are two; yet not *alius atque alius*, for his person is one. Even as soul and body are two things; yet they make but one man, one person: So the divine and human natures of Christ are one person. The faith of a Trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead is what *Sedulius* here calls *fides trina*. The faith of the unity not only of the two distinct natures of Christ in one person, but the oneness of his person Christ with the Father in divine essence, he calls *fides una*. Never did he, or any wise man beside, make any part of this mystery the object of an imaginary idea, but gift of faith. Concerning which glorious object the same poet sings in the sweet strain the learned may see exemplified at the foot of the page†. I thought it worth the reader's while to transcribe the lines of another poet concerning the

* Non quia *qui* summus Pater est, & Filius *hic* est,
Sed quia *quod* summus Pater est, & Filius *hoc* est.
Sic ait ipse docens: *Et ego in Patre, et Pater in me est*;
Rursus, *Ego atque Pater unum sumus!* Arrius UNUM
Debet scire, SUMUSque Sabellius esse fatendum:
Iste filem *trinam*; ast hic non amplectitur *unam*.
Ambo errore pares, quanquam diversa sequantur.
C. Sedulii Scoti carm. lib. 1. *p.* 18.

† *Filius* hic hominis sit maxima quæstio mundi,
Nobiscum Deus est Filius hic Hominis.—
Lumen adesse Dei persensit Tartarus ingens;
Nec cernunt homines lumen adesse Dei —
Hic homo qui Deus est, spes est antiqua piorum;
Spes in fine piis, hic homo qui Deus est —
Visio, Christe, tui, tormentum & pœna malorum est;
Gloria cuncta bonis visio, Christe, tui.

m ſterious humanity and incarnation of our Lord Jeſus in theſe words:

Vir, tamen arbitrio non debens membra virili,
Non patrio natus ſanguine, purus homo:
Non *mulier*, tamen a muliebri fuſus in auras
Semine, virgineæ nobile ventris onus:
Diligit ex æquo ſexum Salvator utrumque,
*Vir mulier*que Deo ſunt in amore pares.

The meaning whereof may be ſhortly ſummed up thus:

Chriſt was a *Man*, yet of no man indeed;
No *Woman*, yet alone the woman's ſeed:
A man of woman, not of man, to prove,
Both man and woman equal in his love.

To which words relating to Chriſt's humanity, may be added the words of another Latin poet, relating to his divinity, ſaying,

Qui crucifixus erat, Deus ecce! per omnia regnat.

Or Sir Richard Blackmore, on redemption, p. 225 ſaying,

He does, as God ſupreme, our worſhip claim,
And, though diſtinct in perſon and in name,
With the Moſt High, in *nature* is the ſame.

Both theſe conjunctly viewed, afford men and women a noble and glorious object of faith and ſpiritual knowledge: But to ſeek after materials for fancy here, though it find what it ſeeks, is but a vain and vile exerciſe, no way ſib to faith.

Dr. Owen, in his book, intitled, *A vindication of the animadverſions on lux fiat*, ſpeaking of the Popiſh images of Chriſt, which, as I have ſaid before, are but the fruit and offspring of mental images, hath theſe words, p. 506. "I know, that one of the great fathers of your ſecond Nicine faith publicly affirmed, in the council, with the approbation of his aſſociates, that Chriſt in ſo preſent with, or related unto his *image*, that he that ſhould ſpeak of it, and ſhould ſay, *This is Chriſt*, ſhould nor err. But I know alſo, he did it with as much *wiſdom* as he whom the Prophet derides for carving a ſtock into the likeneſs of a man, and then ſaying unto it, *Thou art my God*. So, Sir, you may not with your *bodily eyes* look on him that is crucified, becauſe you cannot. And as looking on the picture of him, which you mean, is nothing of that which we contend about; ſo I fear it is unto you only a means of taking you from looking after his *perſon* in a way of *believing*, which he ſo earneſtly calls us unto." Page 508. "*You next* proceed to your plea from the *cherubims* ſet up by *Moſes in the* holy place over the ark; and thence you will *needs* wreſt an argument for your images, and the worſhip *of them*: although your *Vaſquez* is aſhamed of it, and hath

caſhiered it long ago, and that worthily, as not at all belonging unto this matter.—It is of images we are ſpeaking preciſely, and not of figures Figures may include *types* and *hieroglyphics*, and any repreſentation of things. Images repreſent perſons; and ſuch alone are thoſe about which we treat. And, if a *perſon* be not repreſented by an image, it is not his image. [So, by the by, note, that, ſince the perſon of Chriſt is not preſented by the image of him which is formed in the brain by an imaginary idea, it is not his image.] "Now, I pray, tell me, What *perſonal ſubſiſtences* theſe cherubims with their various wings and faces did repreſent? Do you believe, that they gave you the ſhape and likeneſs of angels? It is true, that John, the biſhop of Theſſalonica, in your ſynod of Nice, with the approbation of the reſt of his company, affirms, that it was the opinion of the Catholic church, that angels and archangels were not altogether *incorporeal and inviſible, but to have a ſlender body of air or fire,* Acts v. But are you of the ſame mind? Or do you not rather think, that the Catholic church was belied and abuſed by the ſynod? And, if they are abſolutely incorporeal and inviſible, how can an image be made of them? Should a man look on the cherubims as images of angels? Would not the firſt thing they teach, be a lie? namely, that angels are like unto them; which is the firſt language of any image whatever. The truth is, the Moſaical cherubims were mere hieroglyphics, to repreſent the conſtant tender love and watchfulneſs of God over the ark of his covenant, and had nothing of the nature of images in them." Page 519. "And is it not a fine buſineſs to talk of ſeeing the face of God, which ſhone forth in Chriſt, in a carved image or a painted figure? Is not this to confeſs plainly, that your images are teachers of lies." Page 520. "Your laſt exception is laid againſt what I affirmed concerning the relation you fancy between the image and its prototype, (or firſt pattern,) whereby you would excuſe the honour and worſhip which you give unto it; which I ſaid is a mere effect of your own imagination, on which alone it depends.—But you add, *Is the picture made by the ſpectator's imagination to repreſent this or that thing, or the imagination rather guided to it by the picture? By this rule of yours, the image of Cæſar, did not my imagination help it, would no more repreſent a man than a mouſe.* But you quite miſtake the matter. The relation you fancy includes two things: *1ſt.* That this image repreſents not a man in general, but this or that *individual* man in particular, and that exclu*ſively to all others*; for inſtance, Simon Peter, and not Si*mon Magus, who* was a man no leſs than he or any othe

man whatever. Now, though herein the imagination may be assisted, when it hath any certain grounds of discerning a particular likeness in an image unto one man when he was living, more than to another; yet you in most of your images are destitute of any such assistance. You know not at all that your images represent any thing *peculiar* in the persons whereof you pretend them to be the images; which whereby you represent the same person, even Christ himself, in several places. So that, though *every man in his right wits* may conceive that an image is *the image of a man, and not of a mouse*; yet that it should be the image of this or that man, of Christ himself or Peter, he hath no ground to imagine, but what is suggested unto him by his imagination, directed by the circumstance of its place and title.

"When Clodius had thrust Cicero into banishment, to do him the greatest spite, he demolished his house, and dedicated it as a *devoted* place to their gods, setting up in it the image of the goddess *Libertas*. The *orator*, upon his return, in his oration *ad pontifices*, for the recovery of his house, to overthrow his pretended *dedication* and devotion of it, pleads two things. *First*, That the image pretended by Clodius to be the image of *Libertas*, was indeed the image of a *famous*, or rather *infamous whore* that lived at Tanager. Had this dedication passed, I wonder how this image could have any relation unto Libertas, but by virtue of the imagination of its worshippers, when in very deed it was the image of a *Tanagræan whore*. And the same orator tells us of a famous painter, who making the picture of Venus, and her companions for their temple, still drew them by *some strumpet* or other that he kept company withal. And whether you have not been so imposed upon sometimes or no, I very much question. In which case nothing but your imagination can free you from the worship of a *Queen*, when you aim your devotion another way. *Secondly*, He pleads, That the *dedication* of that image was not regularly religious, nor according to that institution which they esteemed *divine*; whence no sacredness in it could ensue. And want of institution which may be so esteemed, is that also which we object against your *dedication* of images: For, besides a relation to this or that individual person, which, as I have showed, the most of your images have not, but what in your fancy you give unto them, which is natural or civil; you fancy also a religious relation, a *sacred conjunction* between the image and prototype; so that *the worship* yielded to the one, should redound to the other *in a religious way*. And this, I say, is also the product of *your own fancy*.—And, if you could pretend divine infu-

tion conſtituting a ſacred relation between images and their prototypes, yet it would not preſently follow, that they were to be worſhipped; no not ſuppoſing the prototypes themſelves to be the proper objects of religious adoration, which as to the moſt of them, you know we deny, unleſs you have alſo a *command* to warrant you. For there is, by the inſtitution of God himſelf, a *ſacramental relation* between the water in baptiſm, and the blood of Chriſt; and yet I do not know that you plead that the *water* is to be worſhipped. And thus it is as to your *wooden croſs*. You put two ſticks acroſs and worſhip them; you take them aſunder, and burn them. It is the very inſtance of your Nicene council; for ſo they repeat the words of Leontius, and approve them, Act 4. *Whilſt the two ſticks of the croſs are put together or compacted, I adore that figure for Chriſt's ſake, who ſuffered thereon; but, whey they are ſeparated, I caſt them away, and burn them.* A pretty courſe, whereby a man may keep a *ſacred fire*, and worſhip all his *wood pile* before he burns it! And all this you are beholden to your imagination for."

All this idolatry, I add, is owing then to the vain imaginary idea of Chriſt as man, and the imagination preſenting to the underſtanding the figure of a croſs, as Mr. Robe ſpeaks, p 45. of his *letter*: Where he ſeems to cry down external images and crucifixes, and yet cries up and extols this internal imagery; to which is owing all the popiſh images: Whereof it is ſaid, in the foreſaid book, p. 437. "That whereas Pagans worſhipped the images of Jupiter and Minerva, and the like, they (the Papiſts) in like manner worſhipped the images of Chriſt and his apoſtles. And therefore in the *Indies* the Catholic *Spaniards* took away the *Zemes*, or images of their idols, that the poor natives had before, and gave them the images of Chriſt, and his mother, in their ſtead." To this alſo was owing their fondneſs to believe all the idle ſtories in their fabulous legend, to confirm their ſuperſtition by feigned wonders and miracles ſaid to have been wrought by their images: Some whereof are recited by the ſame author, p 489. who there adds, "They all conſent in the ſtory of the image of Chriſt, made without hands, or human help, by God alone, (θεοπεπής,) that he ſent to Abgarus, king of the Edeſſenes; [who, as ſome report the ſtory, was contemporary with Chriſt, and, hearing of his great miracles, invited him to Edeſſa by a letter; to which Chriſt is ſaid to have ſent an anſwer with his picture:] as bellowing a lie as any in the herd."

Charnock, vol II. p 402 ſays, "To worſhip what we miſconceive, *is not to worſhip* the true God, but a god coined

and moulded by our own fancy If we know not God; ſince we have naturally a notion that there is a God ſhall be apt to have falſe conceptions and miſrepreſents of him. And, ſince falſe conceptions of God are degra and diſparagements to him, all worſhip guided by the a worſhip of that notion and image we have ſet up i mind and not a worſhip of the true God;—we worſhi ſcripture-god, but a fancy god; a god made up the *cap* of our own brains and modelled according to our ow *nius*,"—P. 103. "We cannot then worſhip God, wi the knowledge of him. We cannot know him in Chri all the ſtrength of nature, without divine revelation." "Such an ignorant worſhip is certainly idolatry. 'Ti only a *wrong object* draws upon men the guilt of idolatry, right object worſhipped in a *wrong manner;* when we wo him not ſuitably to his perfections, or not according t command, Lev. xvii. 3, 4. 7." P. 480. "Nature itſelf never teach men to worſhip God in images unleſs they able to frame one in which they could gather and ſtor the perfections of all creatures; and that is as impoſſib any or all creatures to perform, as to make a god. All is as intelligible to a rational creature, as the ſh of the ſun is viſible. The one is as evident in the of creation to our reaſon, as the other is to our ſenſe."

Mr. Hugh Binning in his book, intitled, *The common ciples of the chriſtian religion proved*, &c. edit. 1660. p ſpeaks to excellent purpoſe on this ſubject, when diſcou on the ſpirituality of the divine nature. His words "Many ignorant people form in their own mind ſome nceſs and image of God, who is inviſible. You know ho fancy to yourſelves ſome bodily ſhape when you concei him; you think he is ſome reverend and majeſtic pe ſitting on a throne in heaven. But, I beſeech you, co your miſtakes of him. There is outward idolatry, and is inward: There is idolatry in action, when men pai engrave ſome ſimilitude of God; and there is idolatry i agination, when the fancy and apprehenſion runs upon image or likeneſs of God. The firſt is among Papiſts; fear the latter be too common among us And it is i all one, to form ſuch a ſimilitude in our mind, and to en or paint it without: ſo that the God whom many of us ſhip, is not the living and true God, but a painted or g idol. When God appeared moſt viſible to the world, *the giving* out of the law; yet no man did ſee any liken *all: He* did not come under the perception of the moſt *ſenſe; he* could not be perceived but by the retired

refore the conſequence drawn from the one to the other, is
: and abſurd. Becauſe one cannot think of the body of a man
ſenſitively, will it follow, that therefore he cannot think of
perſon of a man *rationally*, without viewing him ſenſitively?
s falſe; for a man can take a rational view of a perſon as ſuch,
hout limiting and reſtricting his view of that perſon to the
ſitive notion of his natural body*. And hence,

I. *A notitia intellectiva ad ſenſitivam non valet conſequentia*; that is, *From intellectual knowledge to ſenſitive, the conſequence deed is not valid*, but vain and falſe. The firſt propoſition in the above argument of Mr. Robe's reſpects the object of intellectual knowledge, the perſon of Chriſt in both his natures; the ſecond reſpects only that which is the object of ſenſitive knowledge, a human body: Therefore his concluſion will not hold, namely, That the faith of Chriſt's perſon as God man cannot be without an imaginary idea of his human body. Though theſe two ideas, intellective and ſenſitive, attend each other as cloſe as ſoul and body; yet they differ as much as ſoul and body do: and therefore, though they are not without one another's *compaſſion*, yet they are without one another's operating aid and aſſiſtance; for they do not work to one another's hand, but as it were with their backs one to another. They look and work in contrary ways, their act and objects being different. Therefore, however cloſely they are linked together, they cannot ſee the ſame things, nor elicit the ſame acts.

Hence, to ſay, we cannot think of Chriſt, or believe in him as God-man, without an imaginary idea of him as man, becauſe he is as ſurely man as he is God, is a falſe and ſophiſtical dream; becauſe, when we believe in him as God-man, we have a real and rational view of his manhood, as well as his Godhead, and of the compleat glorious object of faith. But to ſay, we cannot know this without the imaginary idea of him as man, is a going quite away from that ſubject, to another theme, another ſphere of action, another world; namely, from an intellectual world, to a ſenſitive†; and to take an ideal view of ſuch a ſuppoſed corporeal part of that object, as is not at all in itſelf the object of faith or intellectual knowledge, but of ſenſe and fancy. As if one ſhould ſay, You cannot ſee a man to be a rational man without eyes to ſee him to be a man, or a human body, becauſe he is as ſurely a man as he is rational. But, ſay I, can you ſee him with your eyes to be a rational man, or perceive his intellectuals with bodily organs? No; as he is a man, having a human body, he is only the object of ſenſitive knowledge; but as he is a rational man, the object of rational and intellectual

* Accurate oportet diſtinguere inter axiomata *limitata* & *illimitata*; ſicut propoſitionem *limitatam* & *illimitatum*. Ubi ſupra, p. 179.

† *Phyſica ſunt ſenſibilia: Logica vero ſunt intelligibilia. Cognitio iterum* dividitur *in ſenſitivam & intellectivam*. Ubi ſupra, p. 179.

knowledge. Therefore it is a falſhood to ſay, I cannot ſee a
him to be a rational man without ſeeing him with my eye
my imagination, as a man: For the imaginary idea cannot
plicate or reflect upon the complete ſubject ſpoken of, b
upon the mere corporeal figure of a man; which is not at
object of rational knowledge, but of ſenſe and imaginati

III. *A perſona ad rem, non valet conſequentia**; that
conſequence deduced from a perſon to a thing, will not ho
the above argument of Mr. Robe's, the firſt propoſition,
the *major*, relates to the *perſon* of Chriſt; the ſecond,
the *minor*, relates not to a perſon, but a *thing*; that
human body of Chriſt: Therefore the concluſion will no
That I cannot believe in *that perſon* without the imagina
of *that thing*. *That perſon* cannot be ſeen but by the eye
ritual knowledge and faith, that ſees what is inviſible: B
thing cannot be ſeen by the eye of ſenſe or fancy, that ſee
is viſible and corporeal. To ſay, that the eye of faith
act upon the *perſon*, without the eye of ſenſe, which act
ſome other thing than the perſon, is abſurd. It is a ſa
cannot ſee by the eye of the underſtanding without ſeeing
eye of ſenſe †; nor ſee by the eye of faith without ſeeing
eye of fancy; and that I cannot conceive in my judgme
good or bad properties of a man's perſon, without form
my brain the lineaments of his body. If theſe two can
without one another in point of *cohabitation in the ſame*
yet they cannot be, nor act, but without one another in
of *co-operation, in that ſame way, to the ſame end*: Fo
ſaid, they take different roads, and move towards di
points; the one towards a *perſon*, the other towards a
that is no perſon at all‡. In like manner,

IV. *A tota re ad totum rei, non valet conſequentia*. P
phy diſtinguiſhes betwixt theſe two, *tota res*, a whole
and *totum rei*, the whole of that thing; and juſtly r
that the conſequence drawn from a whole thing to the

* Ubi ſupra, p. 178.

† *Nihil eſt in intellectu, quod non ante fuerit in ſenſu*, is a maxi
limited, as I have ſhewed above, when objects of faith, as ſuch,
ken of. Formale relationis non occurrit in ſenſus, ſed percipitur
telligitur fide. Macoov. cent. p. 181. Mareſii diſtinctio inter inte
noeticum & dianoeticum, omnino obtinere poteſt; adeo ut quam
ſit in intellectu dianoetico quod non fuerit aliquo ſaltem modo in ſ
attamen poſſit eſſe in intellectu noetico quod non fuerit in ſenſib
per ſimplicem & immediatam apprehenſionem intellectus; quod
ſtatuimus fieri in congenita Dei cognitione, non equidem ex idea D
ex, coexiſtente intellectui ipſa Dei eſſentia. Maſtr. Carteſ. gangr.

‡ *Sola* divina natura eſt [Chriſti] perſona, quæ in ſuam perſona
aſſumpſit naturam humanam, &c. Ubi ſupra, p. 124. humana natu
ad adjunctum ἐνυπόστατον.

thing, is void and false. Now, in the foresaid argu- of Mr. Robe's, the *major* proposition relates to the whole of Christ God and man as the object of faith; but the the *minor*, supposes faith to have the whole of that per- its object: Therefore the conclusion is false. This I emplify, so as a child may understand it. There is a difference betwixt a whole man, and the whole of a man. we speak of *rationality*, we ascribe it to a whole man, the person is rational; but not to the whole of the man, se we cannot say his feet and hands are rational*. So, we speak of believing, it is the whole man that believes, the person does so; but it is not the whole of the man, se his body does not. Again†, a whole Christ is every , because so his person is; but the whole of Christ is not where, because his human nature is not now on earth, but ven. Christ is in his whole person invisible, not in the of his person; as Dr. Owen says on another subject, viz. Christ's sole headship over the church, in his *Vindication of animadversions on* lux fiat, p. 383. "That, the presence or e of Christ's human nature not varying his headship, which both considerations is still the same, the supposition of an- head is perfectly destructive of the whole headship of ; there being no vacancy possible to be imagined for that , but by the removal of Christ out of his place: For, he ing head of the church *as God and man, in his whole person le*, and the visibility of the church consisting in its own tion of the truth, the absence of Christ's human nature the earth, neither changeth his own headship, nor preju- the church's visibility, &c." Thus also a whole Christ

omo videt, non qua homo, aut qua rationale, sed qua sensitivum. alysis ultima fit in το sensitivum, non vero in humanitatem aut ra- tatam.—Et dicendum est, homo videt qua sensitivum, non vero tionale, vel sub illo formali, qua homo. *Voetii disp. p.* 531.—Uni- non est objectum formale cognitionis sensitivæ; ergo universale gnoscitur a sentiente qua tali: & consequenter non est dicendum, qua sentiens, cognoscit universalia; sed est dicendum, homo, qua lis, cognoscit illa. *Ibid. p.* 530.

Lascovii distinct p. 199. Tota res & totum rei different. Tota res de subjecto, ratione alterius partis; totum rei de utraque parte l; ut, totus homo intelligit & moritur, sed non totum hominis; Christus est ubique, sed non totum Christi. P. 166. Mala est com- distinctio illa quorundum scholasticorum inter veritatem *theologicam sophicam*. Vitium (1)—(2.)—(3.)—(4) Cum scholastici deberent re hoc sophisma; *Mus habet pedem*, &c. dicebant pedem habere *talem; rationale* enim pertinet ad totum hominem, (non totum ho- P. 107. Aliud est *totus Christus*, aliud *totum Christi*. Ultima hujus s) est in hoc: (1.) *Quod* totus Christus dicitur esse ubique, non au- *tum Christi*: (2.) *Quia* totus Christus a nobis adorari dicitur, non *Christi; hoc est*, humana natura.

died for us; not the whole of Chriſt, becauſe not the divine nature: A whole Chriſt alſo is the object of faith, becauſe his perſon God-man is ſo; but not the whole of Chriſt, becauſe his human body, or material fleſh, as ſuch, is not the object of faith, but of ſenſe; otherwiſe it could not be a true viſible body. An imaginary idea, having this only for its object, hath no part of the object of faith for its object. Faith hath no part of Chriſt for its object, but a whole Chriſt, or his whole perſon, that cannot be divided into parts, as I have ſhewed elſewhere*. And, ſeeing the object of fancy is only a ſuppoſed part of Chriſt, and the object of faith is really a whole Chriſt; therefore it neceſſarily follows, That that part which is the object of any man's fancy, cannot, as ſuch, be the object of faith, ſo long as it is true, That a part is not the whole; and that the whole is the object of faith, and not a part.

In purſuance of the topic juſt now mentioned, I might obſerve, that that which is a truth in a *phyſical* and *natural* ſenſe, may be a falſhood in a *metaphyſical* and in a *moral* ſenſe. Thus, while ſoul and body are united, if any ſpeak as Mr. Robe gives occaſion to do, ſaying, You cannot believe in Chriſt without your body and bodily organs: In a natural and phyſical ſenſe, it is true, becauſe the body is preſent with the ſoul; but in a metaphyſical ſenſe, it is falſe, becauſe I believe with my ſoul, not with my body: Therefore, though, while I live, my ſoul cannot be without my body, yet it can believe without my body; even as I can reaſon and argue without my hands and feet, which are a part of my body, though I do not cut them off from it. Rationality, as I ſaid, belongs to the perſon, the whole man: But it follows not, that therefore it belongs to the whole of the man; for feet and hands are neither agents nor inſtruments in reaſoning. Thus, in believing, the body is no proper agent, though the perſon is. A man believes not with his bodily ſenſes or members. And as it were monſtrous to ſay, a man believes with his eyes and ears, with his hands and feet; even equally abſurd is it to ſay, a man cannot believe without them.

The ſoul that can live without the body when the body is dead, can act without the body even while the body lives. That the ſoul cannot die when the body dies, is not only clearly

* *Alting exeg.* p. 28. Totus Λόγος eſt in carne, quia eſt unitus carni. Totus etiam eſt extra carnem, quia carni non eſt incluſus, nec caro ei exæquata.

Alting controv. de perſona Chriſti, p. 199. *Obj.* Lutheranorum. Per unionem totus Chriſtus eſt ubique: atqui totus Chriſtus conſtat divina & humana natura. Ergo. *Reſpond.* Ad majorem, diſtinguendo inter totum *maſculini*, & totum neutri generis. Totus quidem Chriſtus eſt ubique; *ſed non* totum Chriſti, hoc eſt, totaliter, ſecundum utramque naturam. *Ratio*, quia totus perſonam, totum utramque naturam denotat. Sic totus etiam mortuus; non autem totum, quia non divina natura.

taught in ſcripture, Matth. x. 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul,* and many other places; but alſo hath been taught by Heathen philoſophers, and that from this topic, among others, That it can act independently upon the body: And hence they argued, That as it is independent upon the body *in agendo*, that is, in its *acting*, ſo alſo *in eſſendo*, that is, in its being*. Whatever influence the body has upon the actions of the ſoul *objectively* and *occaſionally*; yet all the the actions that are properly ſoul actions, are independent upon the body, both *ſubjectively* and *efficiently*, as philoſophers obſerve; of which I have ſpoke elſewhere. The body can neither be the ſubject nor efficient in actions properly ſpiritual: And therefore it is falſe to ſuppoſe, that the ſoul which can live without the body, cannot act or believe without the body: And conſequently it is a falſe poſition to aſſert, That none can believe in Chriſt as God-man without that corporeal organ by which we form imaginary ideas; the rational ſoul being inorganical; that is, having no ſuch organ as belongs to the ſenſitive, material and corporeal frame, its nature being incorporeal, immaterial, ſpiritual and immortal. To this purpoſe ſays Charnock, vol. II. p. 481. ſpeaking of the ſoul, "It can ſubſiſt without the body; it doth not in all its motions depend upon it; it can reflect upon itſelf without it, view and pleaſe itſelf in its own perfections, abſtracted from the body: Which ſhadows to us the ſelf-ſufficiency of God." Crawford's dying Thoughts, p. 7, 8, 9, 10.

* The ſoul in man is a ſubſtance diſtinct from his body.—When the body ſits ſtill, and moves not hand or foot, the ſoul can fly with all its faculties as high as heaven in a moment.—The ſoul hath felt ſuch joys, as that the flames that burned its body, could not extinguiſh its joy.—It is a principle in us that not only underſtandeth, frameth notions of things, and reaſoneth, but alſo it correcteth all the miſrepreſentations of ſenſe and fancy.—It can ſit down, and judge upon its own acts; which the body cannot do: Yea, alſo it can bid the body and all its concerns farewell for a while; and, by retiring into its own cloſet-operations, it can behave like a ſeparate ſpirit, even while in the body. It is able to judge, not only of the preſent, but alſo of the future exiſtence of things, and likewiſe of their proportions and diſproportions. Yea, alſo it can contemplate the nature and perfections of God. All which is above the power of matter.—And whatever loſs ſome may think they are at, in conceiving of a ſpirit; yet, it is moſt certain, we have a more clear and diſtinct idea of a ſpirit, that of matter itſelf: For it

* *Maccov. diſtinct. p* 152. Philoſophi Ethnici hoc animadverterunt, *ſcil. animæ hominum, corruptis corporibus, non pereunte; ideirco etiam docent, quod cum anima rationalis inorganica ſit, ut et independens a corpore in agendo, ita etiam in eſſendo.*

is only the attributes of matter we have any positive conception of, for, if ſtript of theſe, it wholly eſcapes our ſight; ſo let a ſoul be viewed in its modes and attributes, there is nothing in nature we can conceive more certainly and clearly. And, though we even wanted an intuitive view of the ſoul, we need not much wonder at it, ſince it is ſo in our bodily ſight; for the eye, though it ſee every thing elſe, cannot ſee itſelf, at leaſt directly and immediately." To this purpoſe alſo ſpeak other writers.

Again, union may take place where there is no communion. When it is ſaid, we cannot believe without our bodily ſenſes and imaginations, in point of union between ſoul and body, it is true, the one cannot be without the other: But in point of communion it is falſe. As there is no fellowſhip between light and darkneſs, as little is there between faith and fancy. They are different faculties, reſpecting different objects, and under different governments. Senſe and imagination in men, in ſo far as they are not free and voluntary, nor under the conduct of reaſon and religion, but natural and neceſſary, belonging to the ſenſitive, and not to the rational life, they are under no moral law, nor properly fall under commands, or prohibitions; even as the ſenſes and fancies of brutes, being deſtitute of reaſon, are under no moral government. Fancy, then, or the imaginary idea, being itſelf under no law, but what relates to the natural and animal life, to alledge we cannot believe without it, ſeems to bring the act of believing, according to the moral law, to be under the check and controul of a lawleſs fancy; as if not only there could be any proper harmony, fellowſhip, or lawful communion between that which is without law, and that which is under the law; but alſo, as if faith and reaſon were as much under the government of fancy and imagination, as theſe ought to be under the government of faith and reaſon, though the former is properly under no moral government at all. At this rate it were better to be a beaſt than a man; becauſe it is better to have ſenſe and fancy without reaſon to govern it, than to have reaſon under the government of ſenſe and fancy. But as the moral law that man is under, cannot allow that his reaſon be under the management of his ſenſe and fancy, far leſs does it allow that faith be under it, or that fancy have a negative upon faith, ſo as it cannot act without it. Therefore, though, during the union of ſoul and body, faith is ſtill troubled with fancy, as an *ill neighbour*, and cannot be without it in that ſenſe; yet it can and muſt be without it as a *manager; otherwiſe* it makes a quick metamorphoſis; turns the man *to a beaſt*, and takes the management out of the hand of faith *and reaſon* both. Hence what men know only naturally as brute *beaſts*, by ſenſe and fancy, without faith and reaſon, in theſe

things do they corrupt themſelves, Jude, verſe 10. And hence in ſcripture, beaſts are preferred to men, the ox and the aſs, to people that do not know rationally, nor conſider matters ſpiritually, Iſa. i. 3.

This reaſoning is ſo far from being nicely metaphyſical, that no diſtinction is more natural and neceſſary, nor more ordinarily made uſe of in polemic divinity. See *Wollebii compendium*, p. 34. *Turretini inſtitutiones theologiæ, tom.* I. p. 530. *Marckii medulla*, p. 128. Where, (proving that the ſoul of man is in each one created immediately of God, from Eccl. xii. 7. Zech. xii. 1. Heb. xii. 9. and from the indiviſibility and corporeal nature of the human ſoul,) when adverſaries alledge, the ſoul is procreated by the parents, and object, That *a man begets a whole man*; it is anſwered, True; *but not the whole of a man*: Even as it is ſaid, One kills a man, when yet it is only the body he can kill, Matth. x. 27. We ſay truly a perſon is killed, when yet it is plain, we cannot mean the whole of the perſon, becauſe the ſoul is not killed. Thus, when a man is begotten or born, it cannot without abſurdity, be meant of the whole of that man, becauſe the ſoul cannot properly be ſaid to be begotten or born. To apply this to the myſterious incarnation of Chriſt, when it is ſaid, Iſa. ix. 6. *To us a child is born,—Whoſe name is, The Mighty God*, we are to underſtand it of the θεάνθρωπος, his whole perſon God-man: But it could not, without blaſphemy, be meant or ſaid of the whole of that perſon, viz. the divine nature, that it was born. Thus, on the other hand, the object of faith and worſhip is that glorious θεάνθρωπος, the perſon God-man, as and becauſe he is God*: But it cannot be ſaid, without blaſphemy and idolatry, that the whole of that perſon, viz. the human nature, or Chriſt as man, is the object of faith and worſhip. When Mr. Robe aſſerts or ſuppoſes this, he draws the charge of blaſphemy upon his own head, inſtead of mine; and knows not, (when he argues from the whole of faith's

* Our divines are ſo far from aſſerting, that Chriſt *as man* is the object of worſhip, that it is mightily diſputed among the moſt learned of them, whether Chriſt *as Mediator* is to be worſhipped, leſt, under that formality, he would neceſſarily be worſhipped *as man*; whereas he is the formal object of divine adoration only *as he is God*. This diſpute is the more accurately and cautiouſly ſuſtained by found divines, both in oppoſition to Papiſts and Ubiquitarians, who debate for the adoration of the fleſh or human nature of Chriſt; and alſo in oppoſition to Socinians, who deny that his divinity can be proven from his being the object of worſhip; in regard that, being worſhipped as Mediator, he is viewed as the intermediate, not the ſupreme and ultimate object. But as it is not my buſineſs at preſent to launch forth into this diſpute, ſo the learned reader that would ſee it treated *at large*, may conſult *Voetius's diſp.* theol. p. 529. queſt. *An Chriſtus qua Mediator ſit adorandus?* and *Turretine's* inſtit theol. tom. II. p. 539. upon the ſame queſtion.

object to a part, while yet no part here, but the whole is the object of it,) that his argument is a mere fallacy.

I might further have shewn how Mr. Robe's conclusion, That we cannot believe in Christ as God-man in one person, without the imaginary idea of him as man, being drawn from faith to sense, from a supernatural to a natural and corporeal object, is quite informal and invalid. But, from what I have said already, it appears, that his argument transgresses all the rules of philosophy*; and that his conclusion is so far from being a truth, that it is a plain fallhood, a sophistical and delusive expression, suited only to the delusive and imaginary work it was intended or adduced to support.

Upon the whole, let the reader therefore carefully distinguish between these two: (1.) A religious, rational, believing knowledge of Christ's human nature in the *understanding*, as it is a truth, that he is man, as well as God; and, (2.) An imaginary, ideal, notional knowledge of it in the fancy or imagination, as it is a corporeal thing, a representation, or a figure and image of a man in the head. The first of these is lawful and absolutely necessary; without which there can be no religious worship; because the object of that knowledge is the man Christ; that is, the person who is God man. The second is unlawful and idolatrous, (being what Mr. Robe says and allows to be an image or species, represented to the understanding by the imagination;) and what ought to be shunned and avoided like the devil; and that because it is an imaginary idea of Christ as man; in which respect he is neither God, nor a person, nor the object of faith and worship, but a mere image and idol in the head.

Before I close this chapter, I shall to these philosophical arguments subjoin a scriptural one, for shewing the fallhood of these or the like assertions, That we cannot think of, or believe in Christ as God-man without the help of an imaginary idea of him as man; or that we can have no right thought of Christ without the help of our outward senses or inward imagination viewing an outward or corporeal object.

However external and corporeal objects presented to the mind by the senses and imaginations may give occasion to rational thoughts or spiritual meditations; yet they cannot properly help a man either to a good thought or an evil one; because the spring of all good thoughts or evil is from within, and not from without. And for this I produce the doctrine of Christ, Matth. xii. 35. and xv. 19. Mark vii. 21, 22, 23. The rise and spring of good thoughts is from the good Spirit of God, the well of water in believers springing up to everlasting life, or the new superna-

* † *Qui volunt contra principia disputare, produnt suam insciti*am. *Liccovii centuria, p.* 170.

ıral principle: For, ſays Chriſt, *a good man out of the good trea-, ıre of his heart bringeth forth good things.* The riſe and ſpring, f evil and ſinful thoughts is alſo from within, and not from with-ut: For, ſays Chriſt, *an evil man out of the evil treaſure of his :art bringeth forth evil things. Nothing from without defiles a ıan,* as eating with *unwaſhen hands*, and the like; but from with-, namely, his corrupt nature: *For out of the heart* proceedeth nil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications,—blaſphemies;—yea, ıd an evil eye.* Hence, by the by, to me it ſeems evident, that hriſt's doctrine does not favour the vain philoſophy which aſ-rts, *That there is nothing in the mind or underſtanding* inwardly, *'at is not firſt in the ſenſes* outwardly, or conveyed thereto from ithout. For as rational thoughts themſelves, *naturally* conſi-ered, are not *properly*, though ſometimes *occaſionally*, from the ıtward ſenſes, but from the rational ſoul itſelf; ſo thoughts *mo-ılly* conſidered, are good or evil, not from the outward ſenſes, the outward objects thereof, but from the good or evil treaſure at is within the heart of man, Mark vii. 21. 23. Nothing om without would defile a man *with evil thoughts*, if he had not fountain of corruption and pollution within, that defiles his ıtward ſenſes, his eyes and ears; and makes them evil; ſo as ſt to let out the pollution *to the ſenſe*, and then draw in more ıd more pollution *by them*, from outward objects. Hence alſo ıriſt ſays, Luke vi. 43. *A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt uit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

But, where the fountain within is clean, nothing from without ın bring in ſo much as an evil thought. Thus it was with Chriſt, hen tempted by the god of this world, temptations could do him) hurt ſo as to defile him. Hence *the prince of this world cometh*, ys Chriſt, *but he hath nothing in me*; nothing corrupt within for ıy thing without to work upon. Thus, ſo far as the inward rinciple of grace in ſaints is prevalent, ſo far is *every thought rought into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt*; and their outward nſes, as well as imaginations, and the outward objects thereof, e purifi d thereby: *For to the pure all things are pure*, Tit. i. 15.

Now, from hence it follows, that our corporeal ſenſitive facul-es, namely, the external ſenſes and internal imagination or fan-

* This fountain of corrupt nature is uſually in ſcripture called the *fleſh*; ıd its oppoſite in thoſe that are born again, *the Spirit*, John iii 6. *In the ſh dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. vii. 18. Yea, from this corrupt fountain ıree great ſtreams always iſſue, which in ſcripture come under theſe ıree names: (1.) Νοήμαλα, the *notions*, *thoughts*, or *cogitations* of the eſh; which riſe up againſt Chriſt and grace, and need to be *brought into ptivity to the obedience of Chriſt*, *by the weapons of warfare that are mighty rough God*, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. (2.) Θελήμαλα, the *wills* of the fleſh, Eph. ii 3. ranſlated there the deſires of the fleſh and of the mind. (3.) Παθήμαλα, ıe *paſſions* of the fleſh, Gal. v. 24. tranſlated there the *affections*: *They ıat are Chriſt's, have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts.*

cy, terminating upon outward corporeal objects, are not the first or great and leading helps to the knowledge of God, or to any right thought of Christ. It is not from without, but from within, that evil thoughts proceed; and even so it is not from without, but from within, that good thoughts proceed. *Natural* and rational thoughts proceed naturally from the rational soul that is within. *Carnal* and sinful thoughts proceed from within; that is, from the same soul and heart as it is carnal and corrupt. *Spiritual* and good thoughts proceed also from within, namely, from the heart as it is a new heart, renewed and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, or from the good treasure that is within the heart. Outward objects then presented to the senses, could not so much as occasion an evil thought, if the heart within were not evil. It is this which defiles the man, even an inward evil nature, an active principle of wickedness there. And as little can outward objects presented to the senses outwardly, or to the imagination inwardly, occasion, far less properly help unto any right or spiritual thought of Christ, if the heart within be not right, and if there be not an internal active principle of grace ready to go forth, and bring in food suited to it, by sucking, like the bee, the honey of spiritual advantage from the flowers of outward objects; which pre-supposes a new spiritual instinct previously given of God; I mean the new heart and new nature, superadded to the natural faculties of the rational soul. Hence, from Christ's doctrine, it is plain, that neither outward senses, nor any imaginary idea of Christ as man, or of any outward corporeal object whatsoever, can give any help to a right thought of Christ, or to any spiritual view of him as God-man, Redeemer. May God himself send real help; for vain are all such *imaginary* helps.

CHAP. VIII.

I PROPOSED, last of all, to offer some remarks upon several virulent passages in Mr. Robe's pamphlet, especially relating to SCHISM, which he charges the Associate Presbytery with, and DEISM, which he seems unable to purge himself or his author from. And therefore I shall divide this chapter into two sections: the first, relating to the former branch; and the second to the latter.

SECT. I.

An examination of certain virulent passages in Mr. Robe's letter, relating to SCHISM, *which he charges the Associate Presbytery with.*

Page 73. Mr. Robe speaks again of the heresy which is advanced about the human nature of the glorious Redeemer, particularly *by Mr. Erskine* in terms, That, IT IS NO PART OF THE

OBJECT OF FAITH; and THAT IT PROFITETH NOTHING; which yet they [meaning his people and the favourers of the late work he appears for] will not charge upon the Associate Presbytery, unless they do really, what they falsely accuse the church of Scotland of, tolerate, and not censure the erroneous, by their not calling Mr. Erskine to account for his heresy and blasphemy above mentioned."

If I had not been able to prove, as I have done, that this poor man is grossly ignorant of the subject he writes upon, and of the very thing he lays to my charge, it would have been hard for me to have borne it. But as I can easily see, that no person that knows the gospel, will find that Mr. Robe had the least foundation for it from my words, which made me to make no great haste in answering it; so I have more reason to pity the blindness, than to resent the calumny of such a writer, after the manner that Mr. Robe calls heresy and blasphemy. So have I written in defance of truth, That the human nature of Christ as it subsists in his divine person, is only the object of faith, and cannot be the object of any imaginary idea; and that to assert, it can and ought to be so, is a doctrine of lies and falshoods, of ignorant imagery and idolatry. No member of the Associate Presbytery was ever so blind as to see with Mr. Robe's deluded eye, that there is any thing like heresy or blasphemy in the words wherein he pretends to find it; and, instead of censuring Mr. Erskine, they are disposed to warn all that would be saved from delusion and damnation, to beware of falling down to Mr. Robe's golden image, that he hath set up instead of the true Christ. But, before I say more upon this passage, it is not amiss the reader notice his words that follow, namely, "These dear people look upon your testimony as *protestatio contra factum:* For they see that you have rebelled and proven stubborn to the discipline and government Christ hath instituted in his church, to the bringing the dreadful guilt of perjury upon your souls; and that you have done more to overturn the doctrine, worship, discipline and government Christ hath instituted in his house, than all the enemies have been since our happy revolution. They observe, those who have been most zealous for your testimony, are far from being better christians since they became such; yea, that they grow only in wrath, spite, envy, evil-speaking and lying, and much self-conceit. They know the most of your zealous followers, who have without finding any bones in it, approven it, have never read it; or, if they have, cannot understand it. They have seen them put it in the place of their Bibles, and good books they were formerly conversant with. Some of them see, that it contains several gross lies, as the reverend Mr. Currie hath proven. And, finally, as to the way of witnessing you require of such as them, by withdrawing from the Lord's ordinances, to which they formerly resorted, and in the

uſe of which they profited, and by engaging never more to hear miniſters of the church of Scotland; they can ſee no more needful to qualify people for giving this approbation of your teſtimony, but lazineſs, groſs profanity, and contempt of ordinances. They cannot think, the Lord calls them to that which any profane man, as he is profane, and becauſe he is profane, can do? And it is what they ſee ſeveral profane perſons, filled with a ſpirit of ſpite and revenge againſt their miniſters, do. Theſe are ſome of the grounds of their rooted prejudice againſt your ſchiſmatical and irregular *teſtimony*. I leave it to others to judge the relevancy of them."

Anſwer. It is one thing to forge a libel, that may be thought relevant, and another thing to prove the facts. Mr. Robe is acquainted with the trade of libelling. No doubt hereſy and blaſphemy, for which he libelled me in that pamphlet, are relevant enough to infer the higheſt cenſure. But, inſtead of proving the facts, he hath but proven himſelf a falſe accuſer of the brethren, and an ignorant idolater, by native conſequence from his doctrine. His bare word therefore cannot be taken for proof, by any impartial judge. To my certain knowledge, he has here heaped up a number of groſs falſhoods, as to the bulk and body of thoſe that are in formal acceſſion to us. How it may ſtand with ſome that chuſe to be our hearers, and attend our meetings for worſhip, but are not formally under our inſpection, we cannot be ſuppoſed to know. But as to the generality of thoſe that are judicially received by us, they are well known to be a number of the moſt judicious, knowing, ſober, ſerious, pious and praying people in Scotland. However, theſe people, and we as upon their heads, are ſtrangely attacked in the paſſage above cited.

I appeal to all readers of it, if here be not a pen dipped in the gall of bitterneſs? Is there any thing here like a goſpel ſpirit, or any way ſavouring of the meek ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt? But rather has it not the ſmell of a bitter, malicious, ignorant and erroneous ſpirit? I have little hope that the judicatures whereof Mr. Robe is a member, will cenſure him for his erroneous and idolatrous doctrine, of which his book is ſo full. But as I remember of a worthy and great divine, Mr. James Briſbane, miniſter at Stirling, after the *repreſentation* given in againſt the act of aſſembly 1720, (condemning *The marrow of modern divinity,*) by twelve miniſters, of whom I was honoured of God to be one, and when the act 1722 on that point was a-paſſing, he openly aſſerted, That he could evince, there was not ſo many errors in that book, as their acts condemning it: So, if the miniſters and judicatures of the eſtabliſhed church ſhall tolerate, and not cenſure the many groſs errors and abominations that are in this and other performances of Mr. Robe, it will add to the many great and *weighty* grounds and reaſons for ſeceſſion that have been already

laid open, to the conviction of all true hearted Preſbyterians in Scotland, that dare not make a ſeceſſion from their true covenanted mother church of Scotland, and that dare not baptize the backſliding judicatures with any ſuch *blazing name*: with which many are blinded, and frightened from acceſſion to us, as if they would thereby be guilty of a criminal and ſchiſmatical ſeparation from the church of Scotland; which are no better than big words to terrify the ignorant, who do not know, that we never to this day ſeparated from our mother church, but have openly cleaved to her, and only made a ſeceſſion from theſe judicatures, becauſe they left her, and judicially teſtified againſt them for doing ſo. Yet, for our doing this, Mr. Robe retorts upon us the charge of perjury; but with as much judgment and reaſon, as he laid againſt me the charge of hereſy and blaſphemy.

With equal zeal and judgment does he aſſert, p. 87. "That we are juſt ſuch enemies to Preſbyterian church government as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were to the government God ſet over the church and ſtate of the Jews." Which words of ſpite and venom, delivered without any ſhadow of reaſon or argument, and with ſuch a dogmatical air, when I read them, they brought to mind the anſwer of that queſtion, Pſalm cxx 3, 4. of which I pray Mr. Robe may have ſuch a *fear*, as never to have a *ſhare*, *What ſhall be given unto thee? Or what ſhall be done unto thee, thou falſe tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.* But. if God hath bid this Shimei rail againſt us, I doubt not but it is wiſdom to let him alone, in ſome reſpects. And therefore, though I cannot condemn the ſilence of ſome of my brethren that fall in with that advice of Wiſdom, Prov. xxvi. 4. *Anſwer not a fool according to his folly; leſt thou alſo be like unto him*; yet I hope they will as little condemn me, (unleſs I were to give railing for railing) becauſe I have endeavored alſo to fall in with the call of Wiſdom, verſe 5. *Anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit.* There are ſome that make their folly evident to all men; and whether Mr. Robe hath done ſo or not, I ſhall leave it to others to judge.

It may ſeem ſtrange, that he is ſo kind as to ſay, p. 85. "For once I'll own to you frankly, that I am for the government's tolerating you and your party;" and yet that he ſhould think, "we are juſt ſuch enemies to Preſbyterial church government, as Korah, Dathan and Abiram were to the government God then ſet over the church and ſtate of the *Jews*." Theſe two expreſſions compared, may make one think how much it is our advantage, that, notwithſtanding the view he has of our rebellious practices againſt church and ſtate, yet the

powers of his prejudices againſt us is at leaſt *for once* overcome by the power of his toleration-principles. I am perſuaded, that many in the eſtabliſhment, even of thoſe that make a tool of him now, are more wiſe and learned, than to reckon him a competent judge in matters either of the doctrine or government of the church of Chriſt.

I was once an ear-witneſs, at the General Aſſembly of this eſtabliſhed church, to the ſpeech of a certain member thereof, wherein, relating to our covenanted reformation, he aſſerted openly, that they *were not now ſtanding upon that foundation.* It grieved me much that he was not contradicted. Whence I concluded, that it was taken for granted by that court, that they were indeed quite off from that foundation; though yet I know, that ſome in the church, particularly the *Preſbytery of Dunfermline at that time*, who took me engaged otherwiſe, were of contrary ſentiments. However, after that time, I took all opportunities to ſhew my mind in a ſuitableneſs to my ſolemn engagements, not only by joining in all upon *diſſents, teſtimonies* and *proteſtations* againſt the courſe and current of defection in this land, that were offered in way of communion with the judicatures; but afterward, whenever an open teſtimony for our covenanted reformation was judicially lifted up in a way ſeceſſion from theſe declining courts, I found it my duty to cleave to that honeſt part of the church that were cleaving to her reformation-principles, and to ſecede from theſe judicatures, that were making ſtill more and more an open and avowed ſeceſſion from their mother-church of *Scotland:* And then took the firſt opportunity of joining with my brethren lately in the renovation of our Solemn Covenants, and declaring to this and the riſing generation, that we were deſirous to witneſs againſt the defection, perjury and apoſtaſy of the times; which hath ſtill been growing to a greater and greater height, eſpecially within theſe thirty years bygone. And as I deſire to bleſs the Lord that gave me counſel, ſo I cannot but wonder at the unaccountable inſolence and confidence of any that ſpeak at the rate in which Mr. Robe takes upon him here to do. I can aſcribe it to nothing, but either, (1.) His dreadful ignorance even of the very preſent ſtate of the corrupt courts and judicatores, which he extols under the great and glaring, yet fraudulent and fallacious name of the *church of Scotland;* as if thoſe who alone are judicially aſſerting all her covenanted principles, were by no means to be reckoned any part of that church, becauſe they *make at preſent* no part of theſe judicatures that are, upon *the matter,* and have been, razing her to the foundation.

Or, (2.) I muſt aſcribe it to his being judicially given up of God to deluſive dreams, blindneſs of mind, and hardneſs of heart, ſo as to be proof againſt all conviction of the preſent ſins, errors and corruptions, that he ought to teſtify againſt; and ſo as to be tormented with the *teſtimony* we give againſt them, and reckon no evil now ſo great as that teſtimony, and no enemies to the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government of the church, ſo great, as thoſe that are appearing to ſupport and maintain the ſame. If ever God open this angry brother's eyes in time, his bitter raillery will be matter of deep humiliation to him. Poſterity will indeed be better judges between the preſent judicatures and us, than the preſent generation, that is filled with ſuch prejudices againſt our appearances. But, as Mr. Robe hath little reaſon to boaſt of his own performances, or attachments to the *doctrine* of the church of Scotland, wherein he hath given evidence of very great ignorance; ſo he hath no great reaſon to boaſt of ſome other writers on his ſide, whom he reckons champions for his cauſe, and againſt us: For though ſome of them have been longer than myſelf in the miniſtry, yet, if I were put to it, I could eaſily make it evident, from ſome of their writings, that they never to this day underſtood clearly ſome of the moſt noble branches of the fundamental doctrine of the glorious goſpel, that have been corrupted by the preſent judicatures within this thirty years, and to which their diſcipline ought to have been a *fence*, if theſe alſo had not been miſerably corrupted and miſapplied. However, Mr. Robe, if God continue to deſert and leave him to himſelf, may and will go on in railing at and calumniating the work of God among our hands; which yet, I am perſuaded, will prove a burdenſome ſtone to all that burden themſelves with it, and gather together againſt it.

I have good reaſon to think there are many miniſters yet in the preſent eſtabliſhment in Scotland that ſee themſelves but affronted inſtead of being dextrouſly defended, by thoſe that are writers juſt now in their favour. Some, it is like, can look over the former faults of *Jus populi*, when theſe, by the ſame hand, are made amends for, by voluminous atonements, that may be entitled *Jus clerici*. Others, it is probable, can wink at what they know to be deluſive and erroneous in ſuch a performance as this of Mr. Robe's while it ſerves a turn, to ſupport the credit of their darling eſtabliſhment, and to run down our witneſſing work among our hands, which tends to diſcover and expoſe the iniquity that therein is eſtabliſhed by a law. And however many profeſs to join with *us that may be naughty* hypocrites, from whom Mr. Robe

takes advantage againſt us and our cauſe ſo unjuſtly; yet all the Lord's remnant in this and the riſing generation will be ready to obſerve how much the words of the prophet are applicable to our time, Mal. ii 7, 8, 9, 10. *For the Prieſt's lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth: For he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts. But ye are departed out of the way: Ye have cauſed many to ſtumble at the law: Ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts. Therefore have I alſo made you contemptible and baſe before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law. Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherouſly every man againſt his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?*

SECT. II.

Concerning DEISM, *which Mr. Robe ſeems unable to purge himſelf and Mr Edwards from.*

Mr. Robe, p. 64, 65, 66. charges me with malice and murder for the note I had about ſome expreſſions, in the end of his Second letter to Mr. Fiſher, concerning the ſcripture. Whether they were the words of Dr. Cooper, or Mr. Edwards, it is no matter. The more learned and worthy any is reckoned to be, and the more free any are of a DEISTICAL ſpirit, the more blameable are they, if their expreſſions anent the ſcripture ſeem any way to favour of it. However, Mr. Robe adopts the ſame way of ſpeaking; which I ſhall prove to favour of that ſpirit, whether Mr. Robe be of it or not. I have no other ground to judge of men's principles but their words. If they deny the charge that their words bear, they ought to avoid, or caution better the words that bear it. The words are ſuch as have a great ſeeming regard paid therein to the ſcripture, namely, *This is the great and ſtanding rule that God hath given to his church, to guide them in all things relating to the great concern of their ſouls; and it is an infallible and ſufficient rule**. Their indeed are the expreſſions that I reckoned, however ſound and orthodox in themſelves, yet ſuch as the refined DEISTS of our day will ſubſcribe unto; becauſe the word of God is not here called the *only rule*, to guide us in all things relating to the great concerns of our ſouls, or to direct us how to glorify God, and enjoy him. This neglect indeed might have been looked over without any ſuſpicion, were it not at this day; wherein *Deiſts* have given the ſame, or the like lofty epithets *to the ſcripture* that are here given, but yet cannot call it the *only rule*. Why, but ſays Mr. Robe, "Did ever any Deiſt, or

* *Edwards diſtinguiſhing marks of a work of the Spirit of God, Edin. ed. p. 19.*

ou favouring of a deiſtical ſpirit, ſay this, [namely,] that ſcripture is the great, ſtanding, infallible, ſufficient rule? ot the doctrine here aſſerted averſive of Deiſm, and in flat radiction to it? [And then a public challenge follows:] e call publicly upon Mr Erſkine to prove, that theſe proions favour of a deiſtical ſpirit, or be reputed further a lerer, and falſe accuſer of the brethren.

ſwer It was quite needleſs for Mr. Robe here *projicere ilas & ſeſquipedalia verba*, to act the boaſter with ſuch great ling words: For what he calls me to prove, is already en to my hand, by two famous divines in England; whoſe ls I ſhall here cite as far as needful to the preſent purpoſe. I ſcarce allow myſelf to think, that Mr. Robe or Mr. Edls either are entire ſtrangers to the late catechiſm publiſhder the title of, *The Aſſembly's Shorter Catechiſm reviſed, and red ſitter for general uſe*; wherein many alterations are made e Aſſembly's Catechiſm, directly croſs to the Aſſembly's , ſubverſive of many precious truths, and making an open to many pernicious errors that abound in this age. This : performance made ſuch a great noiſe, almoſt but ten s ago, that it was animadverted upon by a Commiſſion e General Aſſembly of this eſtabliſhed Church of Scotland, 1735, and eſpecially by the two foreſaid reverend min- at London, in their judicious remarks upon it; inſomuch to ſuppoſe Mr Robe in Scotland, or even Mr. Edwards nerica, were utter ſtrangers to that ſtory, would be a taſh their intelligence. They cannot therefore but know, the author of that catechiſm diſcovered his deiſtical ſpirit principles, even under ſuch titles given to the ſcripture, ere Mr. Robe reckons it abſurd to ſuppoſe they favour of *n*, while yet the title of its being the *only* rule in the caſe ion, is neglected and omitted.

ne little treatiſe is ſaid to be written by Dr. John Guiſe, led, *Remarks on a Catechiſm publiſhed under the title of, The bly's Shorter Catechiſm reviſed*, &c p. 23.

Aſſembly's, Q. 2. Anſwer.	*Reviſal, Q. 2. Anſwer.*
e word of God, (which is con- l in the ſcriptures of the Old ew Teſtament) is the *only* rule ect us how we may glorify and him.	The word of God (which is contained in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament) is not only *a ſufficient, but the principal* rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

The remark is as follows.

This alteration ſinks the Aſſembly's ſenſe with reſpect ie ancient Proteſtant doctrine of the perfection of the

ſcripture, as the *only* rule of faith and practice to chriſ
and leaves room for a thought, as if there were ſome
ſufficient rule, even to us, of glorifying and enjoying
but does not name what that rule is; whether it is NAT
REASON or *tradition*, or the opinion of the fathers, o
decrees of councils or *of Popes*."

Upon the above alteration and remark it may be obſe
that the reviſer makes the word of God, not only the
cient, but the *principal* rule to direct as above; and
quently ſa s as much in a few words, as Mr. Robe and h
thor do in many: For to call it a *inficient* rule, is equal
calling it a *great, ſtanding*, and *infallible* one: for it coul
be ſufficient if it were either a falling or a fallible
Yea, the DEISTICAL catechiſm allows it to be more t
ſufficient rule that is, not only a ſufficient, but the *pr*
rule: In room of which, no doubt, the *reviſer* would all
to be called the *great* rule as Mr. Robe's author does
cauſe room is left for a thought, as the remarker ſays,
there were ſome other ſufficient rule, even to us, or tha
hath given to his church, of glorifying and enjoying him
that the word of God is the great and principal, thoug
the *only* rule.

But, for further proof that his omiſſion favours of D
another treatiſe on the ſame head, ſaid to be written b
reverend Mr Abraham Taylor, is intitled, *The Aſſ
Shorter Catechiſm reſcued from the late reviſer and vindicator.*
The author hath theſe words upon this ſame queſtion,
tered by the reviſer, namely, "This is not only the *fi
tion*, but alſo the very eſſence of DEISM. And we all
what uſe the DEISTS have made of this odious principle,
REASON *is a ſufficient rule for ſinners.*" The author ,oe
to excellent purpoſe, in ſhewing the inſufficiency of n
reaſon, as a rule, to lead ſinners in the way of ſalvation
that the word of God is the *only* rule for this end, p
&c. In p 3 he hath theſe words: "Let him not [na
the *reviſer*] preſume to ſay, that he conſulted the reput
of the ſcriptures, when he allows them to be not only
ficient, but the principal rule; becauſe there is not a I
in the nation but may frankly *grant* the ſame." Even
1. Let not Mr. Robe think, that he conſulted the reput
of the ſcriptures, even when he allows them to be the g
and ſtanding, and infallible, and ſufficient rule; becauſe
what I know) there is not a DEIST in the nation but what
frankly grant the ſame, providing he be not urged to g
that it is the only rule, but be allowed to ſuppoſe that
is ſome other ſtanding and ſufficient rule alſo; thoug

ill own the word to have the pre-eminence, as the great, principal one. Mr. Robe affirms, p. 66. "That, when author aſſerts the word to be the great, ſtanding, infalli- and ſufficient rule, he *aſſerts it to be the only rule; and no other is needed.*" The author indeed may be, and I is of that opinion Mr Robe ſpeaks of, that the ſcrip- is the *only* rule; but his words do not aſſert what Mr. ſays they do And he hath but a weak defender that ld ſupport him, by ſaying, *'No other is needed, ſeeing it is ible, ſufficient, and ſtanding;* for ſo much will the DEISTS , that *no other is needed:* But then, if it be allowed to , that the word is not the *only rule,* and that natural rea- s a *ſufficient* one, then they can ſay, as well as Mr. Robe, *no other is needed;* and conſequently, that the word of and revelation is *needleſs.*

he ſame weakneſs, if not wickedneſs, is expreſſed by Mr. e when he ſuppoſes, "I might as ſolidly argue againſt confeſſion of faith, and him for approving it, as ſavour- of a deiſtical ſpirit, becauſe it does not uſe the word *on-* Confeſſ. chap. I. parag. 2. *All which are given by inſpira- of God, to be the rule of faith and life.*" Hence he queſtions, id theſe compilers, and the ſigners and approvers of it , ſavour of a deiſtical ſpirit? Had they principles tend- to the diſparagement of the word of God, becauſe they not the word *only* here? And is there any reaſon to ar- on this account, againſt Mr. Edwards, who gives more ble epithets to the ſcripture as a rule, than the Confeſ- does in that paragraph?" Alas! how palpable is the gn of Mr. Robe here to impoſe upon his reader? He s, that in that paragraph the Aſſembly give no epithets l to that rule of faith and life, becauſe in the following graph they were to enlarge upon them at another rate, Mr. Robe or his author doth: For they ſhew in the chapter, that the word of God is not the *only* rule, as ing a full diſcovery of the only way of man's ſalvation, alſo ſpeak of "the incomparable excellencies and the re perfection of the ſcripture, the infallible truth, and ne authority thereof, and how the whole counſel of God erning all things neceſſary for his own glory, man's ſal- on, faith and life, is either expreſly ſet down there, or by l and neceſſary conſequence may be deduced therefrom: o which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by revelations of the Spirit, or tradition of men: That infallible rule of the interpretation of ſcripture, is the *ture itſelf, &c.* That the ſupreme judge, by which all *overſies of religion* are to be determined, and all de

crees of councils, opinions of ancient writings, doctrines of men, and private ſpirits, are to be examined, and in whoſe ſentence we are to reſt, *can be no other* but the Holy Spirit ſpeaking in ſcripture." Compare theſe words with the firſt paragraph of that chapter, where it is ſaid, "That the light of nature, and the works of creation, are not ſufficient to give us that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is neceſſary unto ſalvation" Where the Aſſembly evidently prove the ſcriptures to be the *only* rule. And what they here prove, they aſſert in both Catechiſms, in the ſecond and third queſtions of the Larger Catechiſm, "That the light of nature in man, and the works of God, declare plainly, that there is a God; but his word and Spirit *only* do ſufficiently and effectually reveal him unto men for their ſalvation: And, that the holy ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtaments, are the word of God, the *only* rule of faith and obedience;" and in the Shorter Catechiſm, That this, "word of God is the *only* rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God" Let the reader judge, if Mr. Robe, or his author, hath given more noble epithets to the ſcripture as a rule, than the Confeſſion of faith does in that chapter foreſaid? And will it palliate the deceit and prevarication, that he cites the paragraph only which ſpeaks of the rule in general, and looks over the relation it hath to what goes before and follows?

It is plain enough that too many ſigners and profeſſed approvers of the above Confeſſion, who make it rather a bond of union, than a teſt of orthodoxy, as in England they do with their *Thirty Nine Articles*, are giving evidence of too little regard to the ſcripture; eſpecially when the moſt noble epithets they give it, are no other than what DEISTS will ſubſcribe unto. Why ſhould they be averſe from calling the word of God the *only* rule to lead ſinners in the way of ſalvation, at a time when DEISTS are ſeeking to expunge this title out of our ſtandards? And, when ſome of our friends in England are ſetting themſelves for the defence of truth in this matter, as I have ſhewed, is it time for us to let it fall to the ground? I think no divine, eſpecially in Scotland, that pretends to orthodoxy on this point, if he have the leaſt knowledge of the hiſtory of the times, and particularly the hiſtory I have juſt now related as above, can be reckoned excuſable, as not favouring or favouring of a DEISTICAL ſpirit, if he ſeems to extol the ſcripture as the rule, with lofty epithets, which DEISTS may grant; and yet neglect that epithet which effectually tends to cut off DEISM.

Before I leave this ſubject, I cannot paſs the remarkable *way in which* Mr. Robe endeavours to retort and contradict

my words, wherein I found fault with the epithets given to the word of God, as a rule, and yet omitting this of its being the *only* rule, according to our good old way of ſpeaking in the foreſaid Catechiſm. Upon which his obſerve, by way of retortion, p. 65. is, "Now, reader, doth not this poor malicious ſtuff deſerve to be expoſed?" And then he falls on expoſing it in the following manner. "Firſt then, [ſays he,] this proves Mr. Erſkine himſelf to favour of a deiſtical ſpirit, to turn his words upon himſelf. Mr. Erſkine doth not ſay, in the good old way of ſpeaking, the ſcripture is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God *for ever*; he leaves out the word of our Shorter Catechiſm *for ever*. Now, let us argue as he doth It would ſeem any notable epithet may be given it, providing it be not ſaid to be the only rule to direct us how to glorify and enjoy God *for ever*. This good old way of ſpeaking with reſpect to the ancient chriſtian doctrine of a future ſtate, and the everlaſting enjoyment of God therein, and the uſefulneſs of the ſcripture to direct us to this, whatever uſe it may have for this life, ſeems to be going out of faſhion, &c."

This he thinks is enough to expoſe the weakneſs and make of Mr Erſkine's reaſoning here. Now, were it not for the ſake of thoſe that are weak and inconſiderate, I would never be at pains to anſwer this retortion of Mr Robe's; which no man of common ſenſe can read, without ſeeing his groſs ignorance and childiſh baboles, and how his wrath and paſſion, which appears in the paſſionate bitter expreſſions with which he begins to retort my words upon me, hath plunged him into the mire of groſs error and abſurdity. He challenges me for leaving out a word of our Shorter Catechiſm, that never was in it; and, if it had been in it, it would neither have been ſenſe nor truth. If a boy of five or ſix years of age had ſaid to me what Mr Robe hath here written, I would have bid him learn to repeat better the firſt two queſtions of his Catechiſm; and not to confound *man's chief end*, which will be his chief end *for ever*, with the *only rule God hath given us* for attaining this chief end, namely, his written word: Which I doubt if ever any, except Mr. Robe, did ſuppoſe was to be man's *rule for ever*. It may well be ſuppoſed, that no written books nor Bibles will remain unconſumed after the flaming fire and general conflagration of the great day; and that the church triumphant in the other world will ſtand in no need of the ſcripture, or writings of the Old and New Teſtament, nor of ſuch ordinances as now the church militant on earth does: For it is ſaid of the *new Jeruſalem* above, Rev. xxi. 22. 23. *I ſaw no temple therein: For the Lord God Almighty*,

Mr. Robe hath frequently magnified natural ſenſes and imagination as great helps, even to the ſaving knowledge of God; and how much more he would incline to magnify *natural reaſon*, I do not know. Certainly he muſt own this to be a much greater help. I ſhall not ſay, he will call it a ſufficient rule as *Deiſts* do: But it ſeems ſuſpicious, that he hath no ſuch due regard to the ſcripture as he profeſſes, when he ſo bitterly reſents my quarrelling any expreſſions (in point of omiſſion) that give not that rule its due. But, in oppoſition to Mr. Robe's doctrine relating to the helpfulneſs of imaginary ideas, I maintain, that the word of God (accompanied with the Spirit) is the *only* great help to the ſaving knowledge of God; and that this word is the *only* rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

So far have I thought fit to anſwer Mr. Robe's public call to prove that theſe propoſitions above mentioned, together with the aforeſaid omiſſion, favour of a *deiſtical* ſpirit. And I hope I ſhall not be reputed a ſlanderer or falſe accuſer of the brethren, till Mr. Robe ſhall anſwer theſe judicious divines in England, whom I have adduced, together with our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, grounded on the word of God, to prove this point. And, if theſe reverend brethren in our neighbouring nation be reputed ſlanderers and accuſers of the brethren for ſhewing that excellent epithets given to the ſcripture as a rule, and yet not owning it as the *only* rule, favours rank of *Deiſm*; then I am content to ſuffer reproach with them, or rather with our glorious maſter Chriſt, who was alſo called the *devil* under another name; knowing, that none will once attempt to eſpouſe his cauſe without bearing his reproach.

Mr. Robe hath evidently involved himſelf in the guilt of all the public defections and corruptions that we teſtify againſt in our preſent appearance for the covenanted reformation principles, and againſt the apoſtaſy of the times; by declaring, p. 27. That theſe *errors* and *defections we* complain of, *are no where to be found* And this he declares in as bitter and railing language as a man can well utter. His words are, "The principal ſupport of your ſchiſm is by calumnies, ſlander, and miſrepreſentation, and making a noiſe, in ſeveral caſes, about errors and corruptions which are no where to be found, but in your own brains and books." What ſort of a language this is, and how ſuitable to one that would be accounted a grave miniſter of Chriſt, let the world judge. But, as to the matter itſelf, I would aſk, if there be no error, no *corruption* in the church now to be found, what has become of all theſe errors, defections and corruptions, which more than fifty miniſters, together with ſome of us, while we were

in the judicatures, complained of to the General Assembly an-
1732, and which we, and some of themselves, have been these
rty years giving in representations, dissents, and protests a-
nst; till we found ourselves necessitated to withdraw from their
mmunion, who refused to be reformed, or so much as to hear
r petitions for reformation? Are all these errors and corruptions
w quite abolished, and no where to be found, but in our brains
l books? Surely it was never the Spirit of Christ that dictated
h falsehood and raillery. Mr. Robe may think himself suffi-
ntly cautious, by having said, *in several cases* only he thus ac-
ses us. Indeed he seems, by interjecting words of that sort many
ces, to palliate his enmity at the whole of our witnessing work,
lso make shifts for blinding his conscience, and salving his credits
ich he may easily see would suffer, if he made no exception at all.
wever, if it be the same spirit that actuates the subjects of that
slanded work, that I see actuates this eminent promoter of it, I
ve full freedom to beg of God, that all his people may be deliv-
d from that spirit. Mr. Robe is pleased to call that our schism,
ich was a necessary separation, founded upon reasons, both in our
timony and declinature, which are open to the world, and which
r. Robe should have answered before he could have judiciously
lled it a schism. But this would been too hard work for him,
any man else. It was easier for him to say, that the principal
pport of our schism, (which is no reason at all) is nothing but ca-
mny, slander and misrepresentation, and needless noise about er-
r and corruption, which are no where to be found, but in our own
ains and books. What is in our books, the impartial world are
dges; though I must own I scarce think Mr. Robe a competent
dge, whether truth or error be in our books; when I find him, in
s letter, loading, I think I may say, the soundest divinity with the
avy charge of error and blasphemy; and also corrupting the minds
f the simple, though I hope not designedly, but unawares, so as to
ad them to the most subtil idolatry. As to error and corrup-
on, which Mr. Robe says are to be found in our brains, and no
here else, but there, and in our books; I fear I would trespass
gainst the rule of ministerial gravity as much as Mr. Robe, if I
ould hence infer, that, when he searched brains, as well as books,
r once, it could be done no other way, than by the darling help
f his own imaginary ideas. But I close, by noticing,

P. 28. Mr. Robe hopes, "by the Lord's assistance, to make evi-
lent my preverting of scripture, wresting his words, false reason-
ng, fraud and falsehood, from p. 48 to 53, of my Appendix to my
letter (in its former edition.)" But, if it is proven, that it was
not possible for him to make any of these evident, then it appears,
that as he hath not had the Lord's assistance in this work; so it
was *but a profaning of the* Lord's name, to expect his assistance in
fighting against his truth: for *no weapon formed* against it *shall*
prosper, nor the gates of hell prevail.

POSTSCRIPT.

WHETHER my opponent ſhall give a return to this book, I know not only I know it is eaſy to anſwer a whole treatiſe with a few words o wind, by giving it ſome ill natured names, and treating it as a heap o traſh; even as this, though deſigned as an antidote againſt vain imagina tions, may be judged by ſome to be at beſt but a volume or maſs of meta phyſics, and a ſyſtem of airy ſpeculations. But, if ſuch return ſhou be given, as would fairly anſwer reaſon with reaſon, and argument wit argument, it will deſerve to be conſidered; whereas a rattle of word evidently tending to bewray the weakneſs or wickedneſs of the write or containing no better reaſoning than I have found in the letter I hav been obliged to remark upon, I deſign not to regard; nor would I thin it worth my while to ſtudy ſelf-vindication ſo far as to put the honour o an anſwer upon any bitter, railing, or reproachful harangue: For, ſinc *the end of all things is at hand*, and *the day of the Lord* faſt *approaching*, I hope it ſhall be no great pain to me to be deſpiſed and diſparaged for a little while by ſome hands or pens, providing truth be cleared and vindi cated. Therefore as I ſaid in a former letter, *I reſolve never to contend for the laſt word, but for the truth.*

Mean time, as I do not impute all and every one of the abſurdities to my opponent himſelf, which I have found natively deducible from his words; ſo I have not enlarged upon all theſe deductions, merely for his ſake, or on his account, but eſpecially for the ſake of ſome young ſtudents of philoſophy and divinity, to fortify them, in ſome meaſure, againſt part of the falſe and corrupt learning with which the books and ſchools of the preſent age are ſo much repleniſhed. And therefore, though Mr. Rob may not reckon himſelf concerned with ſome of theſe particulars I have inſiſted upon, yet I have handled no ſubject in this treatiſe but what his letter gives me a fair occaſion to diſcourſe upon: I own, that the ſlow progreſs of the preſs, while retarded in the printing of this book, hath left part of it ſo long in my hand, as to occaſion ſome additions from time to time; which has ſwelled it to a greater volume than I deſigned at firſt. But, if thereby it ſhall be rendered, through the divine bleſſing, the more uſeful, I ſhall adore the providence that made it for this end the more full.

There are two ſeemingly oppoſite, yet very reconcileable rules and advices given by the apoſtle, relating to faulty and erring brethren, or perſons we may have to deal with. One is, *to reſtore them with the ſpirit of meekneſs*, Gal. vi. 1. Another is, to *rebuke them ſharply, that they may be ſound in the faith*, Tit. i. 13. Of which rules, with reference to what is above written, I ſhall ſay, that though the ſeverity of my words toward my opponent can hardly exceed the ſeverity of his charge againſt me; yet, if it be found, that in my way of dealing with him, I have either failed of that *meekneſs of ſpirit* that is commended in the firſt of theſe rules, or exceeded that *ſharpneſs of reproof* that is allowed in the laſt, I ſhall be ſo far from juſtifying any ſuch irregular expreſſions, that I hope I ſhall be ready to condemn them as much as any of my readers can do; knowing my own aptneſs to err this way; (though I am not conſcious to myſelf that I have done ſo here;) and knowing how hard a taſk it is, eſpecially in controverſial writings, to keep the heart and pen in ſuch an exact mids, as to be neither chargeable with defect in that compaſſionating *lenity*, nor exceſs in that cutting *ſeverity*, which are both authoriſed by the foreſaid apoſtolical rules, as various caſes may require.

That the true knowledge of God in Chriſt, and of the truth as it is in *him* may be advanced by this book, and true religion, in oppoſition to that *which* is falſe and imaginary, may be thereby promoted, is the earneſt de*ſire and* prayer of the author,

R. E.

ADDENDA.

SINCE I wrote what is above from page 165 to 169, I have had occaſion to ſee that place in Turretine, *inſtit. theol. tom. II. q. 10. p. 72.* to which Mr. Robe refers p. 44. of his letter, without quoting either book or page, or marking in a different character the words of Turretine; which he ſeems but very unfairly to tranſlate*: For, 1. He brings in Turretine ſaying, "That it is no more unlawful to make an external image of Jeſus Chriſt, than to form an image or idea of him in our minds;—for a mental image—is abſolutely neceſſary, &c." Turretine ſays no ſuch thing. He is there oppoſing himſelf to, and condemning the uſe of all images in divine worſhip, as other orthodox writers do. He has not one word there of an external image of Jeſus Chriſt; nor does he ſpeak of the neceſſity of any mental images in ſuch a ſenſe as Mr. Robe calls *abſolute*. If he had been well acquainted with Turretine, he would have taught him elſewhere to diſtinguiſh, (and conſider, that there is *neceſſitas phyſica, conditionis, hypothetica*, as well as *abſoluta:*) For as there may be a phyſical or natural neceſſity, which yet is in itſelf ſinful by reaſon of our now corrupted nature; ſo Turretine in this place ſpeaks of ſuch a neceſſity as is ſuppoſed to be involuntary, or which a man cannot help; for he ſets it in oppoſition to the voluntary work of men in making outward images. Hence, 2. Mr. Robe has not noticed, that Turretine there is only ſhewing, that the conſequence will not hold, if men argue for the lawfulneſs of outward artificial painted images of certain things, from the neceſſity of their having inward natural images or ideas of theſe things; becauſe the artificial image is a voluntary work, merely of choice, and expreſly prohibited of God, and joined with the greateſt danger of idolatry: whereas the mental idea we have of things, is natural and unavoidable; becauſe one cannot apprehend any thing without ſome repreſentation of it, while imagining it in his mind; and conſequently it cannot be equally ſinful with the making of an outward image, eſpecially when this is a work of the will, or of choice, and the other not ſo. Hence, 3. Mr.

* For the ſatisfaction of the learned reader, I ſhall here ſet down Turretine's own words: "Ab *imagine mentali* ad *imaginem ſculptam vel picturam* non valet conſequentia; quia illa eſt neceſſitatis, ſiquidem conſpicere non poſſum rem ullam ſine aliqua ſpecie ejus, aut idea in animo efficta. At imago iſta conjuncta ſemper eſt cum ſpiritu diſcretionis, quo verum a falſo ita ſecernimus, ut nullum ſit idololatriæ periculum. Sed iſta meri arbitrii & voluntatis opus, quod a Deo expreſſe eſt prohibitum, & quod magno cum idololatriæ periculo ſemper eſt conjunctum. Unde perperam non minus peccatum dicitur imagines certarum rerum menti objicere, vel ſcripris comprehendere, & legendas exhibere, ac eas in tabula delineatas viſui ſubjicere; cum magnum ſit inter iſta diſcrimen."

Robe seems to wrong Turretine also in translating that sentence, viz. *At imago ista conjuncta semper est cum spiritu discretionis, quo verum a falso ita secernimus, ut nullum sit idololatriæ periculum.* The last branch whereof he translates thus: *That* THERE IS *no danger of idolatry*; making no difference between the subjunctive *sit*, and the indicative *est*, in the same sentence, but reading them both alike, and thereby altering the sense and meaning of the author; as if he said, *there is* no danger of idolatry; whereas he plainly supposes the danger, by supposing a true and a false object both presented to the mind: But he mentions the mean, namely, a spirit of discerning, whereby we so separate the true from the false, *that there* MAY BE *no danger of idolatry*, or that *we may* avoid that danger. Hereby that learned author intimates, that whatever false representation is made to the mind of the true spiritual worshipper, is altogether involuntary, and such as, by the help of that spiritual discerning which is given to him, he rejects and drives away from him, that he may not worship an idol: insomuch that in the lines which Mr. Robe pretends to gloss and translate, Turretine has told neither him nor me any such thing as he alledges. And therefore I remit him again to Turretine; whom if he read and expound better, he may read his own confutation, and see how unjustly he would father his imaginary doctrine upon that learned author, and impute such erroneous sentiments to him, which his fair and accurate reader will see he was never chargeable with. I had therefore good reason for saying what I said above in the forementioned pages.

How much Turretine is wronged, and how mightily Mr. Robe has been straitened to find an argument or authority for his imaginary ideas, where yet it was not to be found, when he palmed the foresaid errors upon Turretine, may farther appear from the following remark, viz. What Turretine meant by a *mental image* in the beginning of that paragraph, (and from whence he shews that none can justly infer the lawfulness of graven or painted images in divine worship,) he explains in the close of that same paragraph, so as to be quite alien from, and opposite to Mr. Robe's imaginary idea: For he shews there, what every one will grant, that there is a great difference between images of certain things represented to the *mind* in books to be read, (such as figurative expressions, metaphors, similies, parables in the holy scriptures, and other good books,) and images of these things presented to the *sight* of the eyes as drawn upon a table, or painted outwardly, and objected to the bodily sense; and he asserts, that they speak amiss or falsely who say, that the former is equally sinful with the latter. Now, as the author speaks not *at all* of any mental image of Jesus Christ, so he had good reason to say, that there is a great difference between the images of *some things* represented, in similies and metaphors by word or

to the *mind inwardly*, and images of these things present- pictures or graven images to the *sense outwardly*. Why, what Turretine has there said, I presume to add, these em to differ as much as as a divine ordinance differs from an invention: For the former is a representing of things to nd in a way agreeable to the divine command, allowance ample; whereas the latter is a presenting these things to tward *sense* by human art, without a divine warrant, yea t the will and command of God. By the one, which is a enting intelligible things to the mind, by sensible similies ures, we attempt to spiritualize corporeal things; by the which is a presenting painted images to the sense, we corpe- piritual things, (as all truths, or objects of faith and wor- re,) by giving them the shape of bodies. The first of these wful mean, and necessary for exhibiting the things repre- thereby to the *inward understandings* of men as they are l, in order to advance their intellective knowledge: The in the foresaid and many cases unlawful, and a voluntary for exhibiting the things represented thereby to the *out- senses* of men as they are *animal*, tending at best to pro- no better than a *sensitive knowledge*; which is quite distinct a spiritual and intellective knowledge, both in the nature rtainty thereof. Which the learned philosopher Hiere- (Disp. p. 170.) distinguishes thus: "Intellective know- [says he] is more certain than sensitive; and that, 1. Not ch in respect of their power, (for sense does as certainly with its proper sensible object, as the understanding does ntelligible one,) as indeed in respect of their objects: For ject of sense is many ways variable; but the object of un- ding is more invariable, because it understands universals irituals; but sense knows only singulars and materials: lso in respect of the substance, that is singular, sensible and al. The knowledge of the understanding is more certain he knowledge of sense; because sense only touches the that are intrinsical and accidental; but the understanding ates the intrinsical and innermost essence of the thing. 2. consider the powers of them as such, not in relation to bjects, the intellective is absolutely surer than the sensi- because the last of these may, on many accounts, be hin- from obtaining certainty, namely, by the distance of the m, or the too great nearness of it, or the organ not right- osed, &c. But the understanding, though it may be de- , yet it is not subject to so many deceits, nor on so many nts. In a word by the understanding we are said properly ow by a certain infallible evident knowledge. And hence nowledge of *things necessary* is more certain than our know-

ledge of things *contingent* (or fortuitous:) For, seeing th
certainty are more certain than things contingent, the kn
of the former will also be more certain than the knowl
the latter; because knowledge is proportioned to its obj
the subjective certainty *(mentis)* of the mind depend
the objective certainty *(entis)* of the being or thing k
Now, by sensitive knowledge the human nature of Chr
not be known to be what indeed it is, namely, a nature
sisting in itself: Of which the same learned Hierebo
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sistence of its own; as it is evident in Christ; who
Human or created subsistence." Now, to prescind or
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ly, as a human corporeal substance, an object of sense,
sensitive imagination. Nothing about Christ, as he is the
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est absurdity. A sensitive knowledge here agrees neither
son nor religion. Hence, for example, the sensitive i
Christ as a crucified man, presented to the mind, belongs
to faith. In opposition to such a vain notion I may cite th
of Charnock, vol. II. p. 1171. "We are to believe in Ch
the remission of sin; which is obtained, not so much by t
fice, as by the quality of the sacrifice. To consider him
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upon the greatness of his person who was made a sacrific
Faith therefore respects the person of Christ immediately;
absolutely in himself, but as he stands in relation to his
as his Son and his servant." By sensitive knowledge a n
think he is most sure, when yet it is quite otherwise; an
he has an intellective knowledge of a person with whom he
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Christ when they were speaking to him, and he to them, Jo
19. *Ye neither know me, nor my Father: If ye had known
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Mr. Robe may think he knows the human nature of Chr
in heaven, as well as he can think of Enoch or Elias ther
let him answer Charnock, if he will, who says, vol. II.
"The humanity of Christ is glorified above the reach of an
understanding. The glory of the saints is not to be fathc

the conceptions of men; much leſs the glory of Chriſt the exemplar of all the glory they are to have." In a word, I may add, by ſenſitive knowledge in itſelf a man is *little higher* than a brute, Pſal. xcii. 6. whereas by intellective and ſpiritual knowledge a man is *little lower* than an angel, Pſal. viii. 5. From what I have ſaid above it may be evident to the judicious, that the mental image Turretine ſpeaks of, is as different from the imaginary idea Mr. Robe maintains, as a ſpirit is different from a body, or a ſpiritual from a corporeal thing: For the objects of the mental idea Turretine mentions, are things intelligible, and as they are intelligible; and the ſpecies and ideas, which he makes neceſſary, are intelligible ſpecies and intellectual ideas; inſomuch that though the ſubjects of diſcourſe ſhould be things material and corporeal, yet the mind is occupied about them in a ſpiritual or rational way, or in an orb vaſtly ſuperior to matter or bodies, and about them as they are intelligible: Whereas the objects of imaginary ideas Mr. Robe ſpeaks of, are things corporeal; and the ſpecies and ideas he makes neceſſary, are corporeal ſpecies and imaginative ideas; inſomuch that the things about which theſe ideas are converſant, being only things material and corporeal, the mind to which theſe things are preſented, is occupied about them in a carnal or ſenſitive way, and only as they are corporeal, according to Mr. Robe's own confeſſion. So that thus the angel is brought down to the brute, to move in an inferior ſenſitive orb, vaſtly below itſelf, and below its own proper, ſpiritual and intelligible objects; and the rational mind is but darkened and abuſed by objects of ſenſe and fancy preſented to it, inſtead of objects of faith and ſpiritual underſtanding. Hence it appears, that as, on the one hand, from the mental images Turretine ſpeaks of, to infer, as he ſays, the lawfulneſs of graven and painted images, is highly abſurd, as well as contrary to the command of God; ſo, on the other hand, from thence to infer, as Mr. Robe does, the neceſſity or lawfulneſs of an external image of Jeſus Chriſt, or an internal imaginary idea of him, is, by the ſame parity of reaſon equally abſurd, and equally overturned by Turretine's argument.

Mr. Robe may therefore conſider, not only what wrong he hath done to Turretine, if ſuch a famous name can be fullied with ſuch a fooliſh pen; but eſpecially what wrong he has done to him who has *a name above every name*; ſince an image of Jeſus Chriſt, either pre ented to the eye outwardly, or painted on the imagination inwardly, can never give any but a falſe repreſentation, not only of that infinitely glorious perſon, but even of that human nature which it pretends to repreſent; and ſo can be no help to, or means of underſtanding it: For, as the learned philoſopher above named ſays, (p. *ib.* where he illuſtrates both the branches of the ſaying, viz.) "He that underſtands a thing otherwiſe than it

is, does not understand it; and he that understands a thing otherwise than it is, understands a falsehood."

At p. 276. l. 2. it may be added, that Turretine speaks to this purpose, *Instit. theol. tom. I. p.* 182. "Tis little matter whether the natural sense of a Deity be explained or expressed by a natural knowledge, or by a common notion, or by a mental conception, or with later writers, by an idea of God as the most perfect being, impressed into our minds: It comes to the same purpose, viz. That there is ingraffed in every one by nature the sense of a Deity, which suffers not itself to be hid, but exerts itself of its own accord in all adult persons that are endued with a sound mind. Only we observe, that an idea of God is not properly said to be imprinted in us, if by it is signified any species or intelligible image of God in our minds, supposed to give a clear and distinct representations of the quiddity and essence of God: For this is what neither the infinite Majesty of God nor our finite and frail understanding can allow or admit, &c."

END OF FAITH NO FANCY.

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APPENDIX

TO THE BOOK, INTITLED,

FAITH NO FANCY:

RELATING

PART OF THE LATE WRITINGS OF THE REV. MESSIEURS WILLISON AND CURRIE:

SHEWING

ME GROSS FALSHOODS THEREIN; AND ESPECIALLY CLEARING SOME POINTS OF GOSPEL-DOCTRINE, INJURED BY THEIR DEFENCE OF THE ACT OF ASSEMBLY 1722, *&c.*

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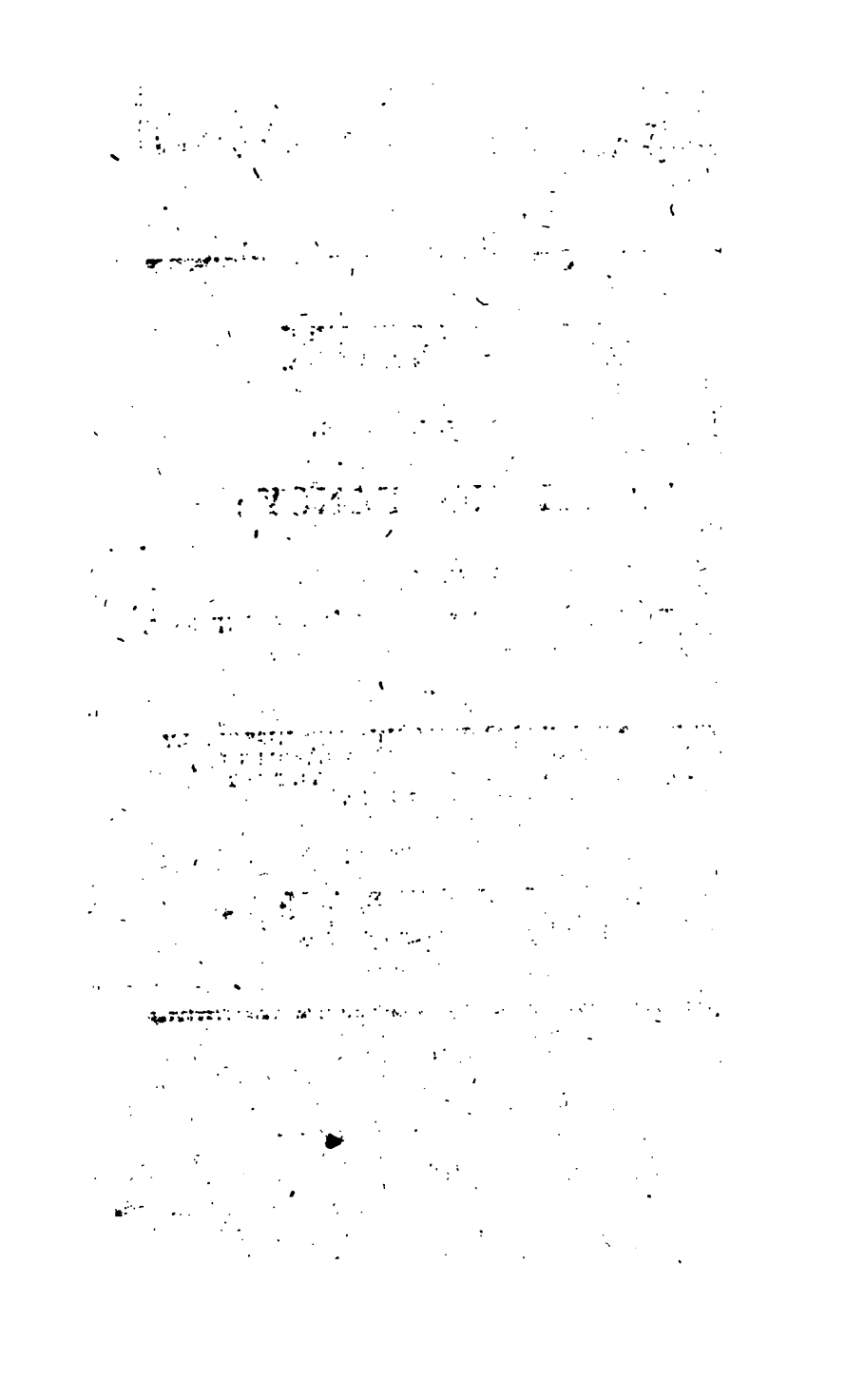

APPENDIX,

Containing ſome Remarks upon Part of the late Writings of the reverend Meſſieurs Williſon and Currie, touching ſome points of Goſpel-doctrine, injured by their Defence of the Act of Aſſembly 1722, *&c.*

AFTER theſe remarks upon Mr. Robe's pamphlet, I may, before I cloſe, notice, that he has no great reaſon to boaſt of his helpers, particularly the reverend Meſſieurs Currie and Williſon, with reference to ſome of their late writings; wherein I ſuppoſe he and they will have but little credit of one another, are all be done. They have publiſhed, beſides other errors, ſome of the greateſt falſhoods in fact, which every man living may know to be ſo. I ſhall give a ſingle inſtance in each of them, after I have noticed ſome points of doctrine wherein they have erred: for it cannot be expected that now I ſhould fall upon the anſwering their pamphlets. I ſhall only offer a ſwatch of what regard is owing to their preſent writings, while they are driven aſide out of God's way with the wind and tempeſt of the late temptations, not yet over with reſpect to them.

I have ſome reaſon, in an Appendix to the foregoing treatiſe, to ſpeak of theſe two brethren, and their doctrine, in regard they have both eſpouſed Mr. Robe's doctrine of imaginary ideas, of which I have been treating. Mr. Currie has done ſo in his pamphlet, intitled, *The plain perjury*, &c. p. 11. where he quotes Mr. Robe's *fourth letter* with approbation, declaring Mr. Robe has proven his point; or, as he expreſſes it, ſhewn to be groſs hereſy what is there alledged againſt Mr. Fiſher and me. Of which afterward. Mr. Williſon has eſpouſed that doctrine likewiſe, in his letter to Mr. Fiſher, p. 7. where he brings in Mr. Robe among the number of judicious miniſters that have read philoſophy and divinity, and ſpeaks of his ſecond letter to Mr. Fiſher with approbation and ſatisfaction, in which he vented that imaginary doctrine, which my remarks upon, occaſioned his writing more upon that ſubject in his fourth letter; which now has occaſioned this foregoing treatiſe. If it appear, from what I may ſay in this Appendix, that theſe two brethren are not ſuch friends as they ought to be, unto ſome points of true goſpel-doctrine, it will appear alſo, that God is righteous, in ſuffering them to fall into the mire of eſpouſing this imaginary doctrine, I mean this relating to the imaginary idea of Chriſt as man: which may ſeem the more ſtrange, ſince Mr. Williſon aſſerts, in the ſame page of his letter

above cited, that we cannot think upon ſpiritual objects without imaginary ideas attending our meditations; *which indeed* (ſays he) *is owing to our lapſed and imperfect ſtate.* Whence one would think he cannot be of Mr. Robe's mind, as to theſe ideas in believing; as if they were as much abſolutely neceſſary *helps*, as they are natural *attendants* in ſpiritual meditation: for, if every thing that is owing to our lapſed and imperfect ſtate, that naturally attends our ſpiritual work, be judged a neceſſary help toward the right performance thereof, then fleſh and ſpirit might ſhake hands and agree.—Mr. Currie alſo, in another late pitiful pamphlet, intitled, *A new teſtimony*, &c. ſays, p. 40. *That that which is only imaginary, hath nothing of reality in it, having no being but in the man or woman's fancy or imagination.* But, while theſe brethren are buſied in their endeavours to prove ſelf-contradictions on others, God is ſuffering them thus, with their own hand, to expoſe themſelves to the world as ſelf-condemned.

But it is the leſs wonder that they are left to embrace this deluſive and imaginary doctrine, in regard they have been alſo left to embrace that deluſive and imaginary work which it is deſigned to ſupport. This muſt be my continued ſentiment anent that work, till it appear to have theſe marks of a ſaving work, in oppoſition to a deluſive one, which I opened up in the pamphlet, intitled, *Fraud and falſhood diſcovered*, &c. and reprinted at the end of this Appendix.

The reverend Mr. John Currie, (before I ſpeak of the above falſhood,) ſince he left his firſt love and zeal, has been ſo far left of God, as to eſpouſe this deluſive imaginary doctrine, by defending and adopting what Mr. Robe has written; as appears in his ſcandalous and calumnious book, intitled, *The plain perjury and great iniquity of the Seceding brethren's new covenant*; where he ſays, p. 11. "What errors can you charge upon any of them?" and brings in his adherer to the church anſwering thus: "Sundry might be particulariſed; I mention only two at this time; as, *firſt*, the error that has been advanced or maintained by the reverend Meſſieurs Ralph Erſkine and James Fiſher, which Mr. Robe, in his fourth letter to Mr. Fiſher, p. 31. &c. has ſhewn to be groſs hereſy, [*he ſhould have ſaid blaſphemy too, as Mr. Robe does; but it ſeems his conſcience ſtartled here,*] namely, their *denying that the human nature of Chriſt is any part of the object of faith.* Surely all that would be ſaved, they muſt believe in him, as he is the adorable *Immanuel*, God-man, in two diſtinct natures, &c." Here Mr. Currie takes it for granted, at leaſt repreſents to the world, what I am ſure his conſcience, if it be not now ſeared, dare *not affert* before God, that we are chargeable with this groſs hereſy, *as he* calls it, and yet expreſſes in ſuch a way, as ſhows, I fear, *his groſs ignorance* of this ſubject. This I muſt conclude is the caſe, *unleſs* he can ſhow me, whether Chriſt's two diſtinct natures

perſon, be two diſtinct parts of the object of faith; or, if
ject cannot be parted, and a whole Chriſt, God and man in
ſon, be only one undivided object of faith, what part of
ject does faith leave behind, to be the object of his or Mr.
imaginary idea? and whether faith, that takes in the whole
need the help of fancy, that is ſuppoſed to take in but a
here yet there are no parts, but two natures in one perſon-
hat cannot be conceived apart without conceiving a falſ-
or conceived unite any other way but by faith? His an-
this might diſcover, whether he underſtood what he was
.. 'Tis true, Mr. Currie does not ſpeak at all of an ima-
idea of Chriſt as man, as neceſſary to faith, nor does he aſ-
it that image of Chriſt in the head, or that corporeal ob-
ch may be the object of any man's fancy, is any part of the
f faith: this he deceitfully hides, (tho' he knew it was the
the queſtion), that ſo none might ſee what is juſtly chal-
n Mr. Robe, his confounding faith and fancy; and that
aders might be led to think we were excluding the human
f Chriſt, as ſubſiſting in his divine perſon, from belonging
bject of faith. He was reſolved, it ſeems, to be ſo far
ting the queſtion fairly to his readers, that they ſhould
; the leaſt hint from him, whereby they ſhould be able to
efend us from that bloody charge, but might be perſuaded
guilty of groſs hereſy in our writing, as well as groſs
in our covenanting. But God will not be mocked with
rds of diſſimulation, deceit, diſhoneſty and wilful ſlander.
been too much the ſtrain of his writings, ever ſince he
field againſt that now glorified ſaint Mr. Wilſon, or ra-
inſt that reformation cauſe he defended. But, as to the
hand, I own, that theſe twenty four years, by his way of
g of faith, when I heard him, I had a jealouſy, that he
e miſt about the doctrine relating to the proper *aſſurance*
and the ground of it: but now he has alſo bewrayed his
or ignorance as to the true *object* of faith, the glorious
s, as preſented in the glaſs of the goſpel, while, by juſti-
r. Robe's doctrine, he hath made an imaginary idea of
man, or a mental image of his human body, to be of
cern therein. I muſt ſuppoſe, that he has written either
ly or maliciouſly. I would rather incline to impute it
ance than malice, or envy; which will but burſt and
e veſſel that holds it: This made the poet Martial ſay,
r, *quiſquis rumpitur invidia.* But, if any ſhall ſuppoſe
ily raſhly and inconſiderately he hath done ſo; this will
f, after conſideration, he ſhall retract this groſs doctrine:
will be glad to do, if he hath the regard he profeſſes to
he honour and glory of our Immanuel, God-man, whom

he hath diſhonoured and affronted, by eſpouſing the idolatrous doctrine of faith, built upon the imaginary idea of him as man; which includes neither his Deity nor perſonality, nay, nor any rational knowledge of his humanity, as it is an intellectual creature; far leſs any view of the myſtery of that humanity, as ſubſiſting in the perſon of the eternal Word. It is with fear and trembling before God, I ſhould obſerve, with relation to this my once very dear and reverend brother, that his rejecting and reproaching the duty and teſtimony of the day, hath juſtly provoked God to take vengeance on his inventions, and give him up to embrace and patronize both the defections and deluſions of the day.

But now the falſhoods, of which I give but one inſtance, is in p. 20 and 21 of his foreſaid pamphlet, where he is attempting to prove, that the covenant which the brethren and other Seceders now take, is a covenant in which they ſwear ſolemnly and plainly againſt themſelves; "which, he ſays, is manifeſt from this, that in their new covenant they ſwear againſt Independency, and yet they themſelves declare for, and go in with our brethren the Independents, in what is the main thing in controverſy between them and the Preſbyterians: as when theſe brethren's doctrine is, that no regard is to be had to the ſentence or determination of church judicatures, no not of a General Aſſembly, unleſs we judge them to be right, and agreeable to God's word, &c." This he here attempts to prove to be an Independent principle, and not a Preſbyterian one, but the main thing Preſbyterians have in controverſy with them. Now, that this is a groſs falſhood, Mr. Currie himſelf proves in his own ſermon before the ſynod of Fife, but twelve years ago, on 2 Tim. ii. 15. publiſhed by himſelf; where, p. 32, 33, 34, 35. he ſhews, firſt from ſcripture, then from our old and late confeſſions of faith, and afterwards from the teſtimony of great men in the church, that what he now calls an Independent principle, is and ever was a Preſbyterian principle. The paragraph is too long to be here inſerted; but as many will have the ſermon among their hands, ſo they that have it may compare Mr. Currie *now*, with Mr. Currie *then*; and I am ſure, if they have any eyes in their heads, and ingenuity in their hearts, they will ſee and acknowledge, that he is as far from what he was, as darkneſs is from light; inſomuch that I bid him a defiance to anſwer his own arguments, by which he demonſtrates, that this doctrine (namely, That no regard is to be had to the authority or determination of Preſbyteries, Synods, Commiſſions, General Aſſemblies, nay, nor Ecumenic Councils, but in ſo far as judged right and agreeable to God's word) is and ever was a Preſbyterian principle; or, which is the ſame, that we ſhould acquieſce in, ſubject our judgments, or yield obedience to their determinations, without examining whether agreeable to God's word, is not, nor

ever was, a Presbyterian principle. And I can hardly think Mr. Currie can compare himself with himself, without shame and confusion of face before God and man. How heavy is the judgment of God upon him, that he is left now to abandon this Presbyterian principle, and espouse what he there, in the forecited pages, proves to be a Prelatic one, and seems now to approve of what he then and there called *the blind obedience of Romanists* *. But perhaps it will be the province of others to take more particular notice of his present writings.

The reverend Mr. Willison, in a Postscript to what is called, *A fair and impartial testimony*, does attempt, with great pains, to expose the work of God among our hands, by casting loads of heavy reproach, and false calumnious charges upon the late acts of the Associate Presbytery, both relating to the doctrine of grace, and the renovation of the covenants. I doubt not but it will appear in due time, how much he hath exposed himself in his attempt, and shown his own weakness and wickedness in what he hath advanced against the Seceding brethren: which I expect will be examined by some other hand. But as the truths of the glorious gospel should ly nearest to our hearts, so what I am to notice here relates thereto. It is very unpleasant, to see a man bewray his great ignorance of the gospel, that hath preached so long and printed so much about it. But that even the reverend Mr. Willison hath done so, to me appears evident: for, in his attack upon the first of these acts, he seems to have meddled with what was above him. I mean above the insight he has ever yet got into gospel-doctrine. And, till he shall clear himself of heterodoxy, or reconcile with orthodoxy, his asserting Christ's offices to be the proper fountain of God's promises, (*cujus contrarium est verum*), and erroneous and legal positions dropt here and there in his catechisms, however much reputed, and disseminate among the vulgar, I cannot look upon him as a very fit judge to determine any thing against the Associate Presbytery's act anent the doctrine of grace: against which I think not strange that he, according to the custom of other Legalists, insinuates the old rotten charge of Antinomianism, as he does, p. 130. from which the apostle Paul found himself obliged to defend that doctrine, saying, *Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.* Nor do I think strange, that he and his seven brethren, the subscribers of what

* Of this principle see *Maccovii & Arnoldi regulam* 12 *de eccl. fia*, p. 145. *Ecclesia non credendum, nisi ex scriptura loquatur, liquet Gen.* 17. *si ex praescripto legis loquuntus fuerit, Matth* 28. *Ite, & docete, &c.* page 170. *Qui volunt contra principia disputare, produnt suam insciti am.* What the poet said of virtues once attained, I may say of *principles*,

Turpe est { *virtutem* / *principium* } *dedidicisse* { *datum.* / *datum.*

they call the *fair and impartial teſtimony*, have thereby, either through their great ignorance, or inexcuſable inadvertency, ſubſcribed a teſtimony againſt the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, in the very vitals of it, by their ſigning with their hand an approbation of the act of Aſſembly 1722, explaining and confirming the acts 1720, by which ſo many precious truths of the goſpel were condemned. This they did, p. 44. of their Teſtimony; where they ſay, "It muſt be owned, that, when the Aſſembly 1722 came to review and explain theſe haſty acts paſſed in 1720, they did juſtice to truth, and declared their minds, concerning the acts and propoſitions quarrelled, in very ſound and orthodox terms." Where three things may be remarked. (1.) They plainly prevaricate with reference to the title of the act 1722, as if it was only an explication, and not a confirmation of theſe haſty acts (as they ſtile them) paſſed in 1720; whereas the very title of the act bears, that it was for explaining and confirming it: ſo that, in ſo far as truth was condemned by the act 1720, that condemnation was confirmed by the act 1722. And therefore we that were the repreſenters, knowing that no explication would mend an act by which truth was condemned, addreſſed for the repeal thereof; which was never granted. (2.) They here aſſert, that the Aſſembly 1722 did juſtice to truth. To this purpoſe, but with as little knowledge and conſideration, ſaid Mr. Currie, in his *Eſſay on ſeparation*, p. 115, "That, if in [ſuch and ſuch] a particular the Aſſembly was unſound in 1720, yet ſhe was orthodox in 1722." But what juſtice was done to truth by that act, may appear to all the lovers of the truth as it is in Jeſus, who ſhall with judgment and underſtanding read and conſider the Aſſociate Preſbytery's act anent the doctrine of grace. Nay, all the juſtice done to truth was ſuch a daſh as made her fall in the ſtreet, ſo as never yet to be raiſed up in the eſtabliſhed church. (3.) They here aſſert, that the Aſſembly 1722 declared their minds concerning the acts and propoſitions quarrelled in very ſound and orthodox terms. Whence we may ſee, from the inſtance they give, what terms theſe brethren reckoned ſound and orthodox, even theſe that expreſſed the *neceſſity of holineſs* to ſalvation; thus, that though it does not give a right or title to it, yet it *is a federal and conditional mean, having a kind of cauſality in order to the obtaining of glory*. They approve of the act, 1722, explaining that point in theſe terms; which yet are ſuch as refined Papiſts, moderate Arminians, and any Legaliſts, may agree with, that turn the goſpel to a new law, or a new covenant of works, requiring, beſides the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, to found our right and title to glory, a new and another righteouſneſs in our perſons, to found our poſſeſſion of it, or to be a federal condition and cauſe of it. Here is at beſt but the old covenant merit of paction on our part, confounded with the new cov-

mant merit of purchaſe on Chriſt's part; and ſuch a way to heaven and eternal life, as led the whole Jewiſh nation to miſs it, while they *ſought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling-ſtone*, Rom. ix. 33. I doubt not but theſe *acts* 1720 and 1722 were through inadvertency gone into by ſome members of theſe Aſſemblies, and perhaps thro' inadvertency theſe brethren have ſubſcribed an approbation of them; yet, if they be the true friends of the truth, and begin to advert that they have condemned it, ſurely they will never ſuffer it to ſtand condemned by them, as now it hath been by the judicatures of the eſtabliſhed church theſe twenty four years.

It would ſeem it was partly through inadvertency, as well as with deliberation, that Mr. Williſon himſelf hath ſubſcribed an approbation of that act 1722; for as he did it before he read our act condemning it, ſo, upon the ſight thereof, it ſeems he was ſomewhat ſtartled; as appears by his Poſtcript, p. 127. He was thereby led to read over the Aſſembly's acts, and then ſays, (1.) *Upon ſecond thoughts I ſhall not ſay it is ſo well worded as could be wiſhed.* This way of ſpeaking is like that of Mr. Currie's Eſſay, p. 114. where, ſpeaking of the act 1720, and bewraying his ignorance of what he calls *the Marrow doctrine*, a name by which the goſpel-doctrine was defamed, he brings in Mr. Allan Logan as no friend to it; by which he does little ſervice to his memory, though he ſtiles him *a worthy ſervant of Chriſt*: and he ſpeaks of his condemning that act, yet ſo as if he had complained of nothing but the *wording of it*; though it is well known there were ſeveral points in it which he could by no means juſtify. And hence, if I may refute one ſtory with another, it can yet be proven by ear-witneſſes, that, when a reverend Profeſſor was, in open court, defending the act 1720, and condemning the Marrow for aſſerting, and our repreſentation for allowing, that, *as the law is the covenant of works, believers are wholly and altogether ſet free from it, ſet free both from the commanding and condemning power of the covenant of works*; and when he was granting that believers are free from the *condemning power* of the law as a covenant of works, but alledging, that to ſay they were free from the *commanding power* of it, was unwarrantable or unaccountable: Mr. Logan, according to his uſual ſhort and ſententious way of ſpeaking, riſes up, and cries out, *Take up your fine profeſſors of divinity, Moderator.* And as by this he means a ſevere animadverſion upon that profeſſor's ignorance about that point; ſo it is ſufficiently known by ſome of our number, how the ſaid profeſſor taught the ſtudents under him, *That though Proteſtants oppoſed the Popiſh merit of condignity, yet they allowed that merit of paction* which I have hinted at above; though, by the by, I know no merit but of this laſt ſort, that could take place even under the covenant of works made with the firſt Adam. What

is ſaid here, may tend to ſhew what was the ſpirit and principle of the chief framers of theſe acts 1720 and 1722; though Mr. Currie ſays, he thinks the church of Scotland was far from deſigning the leaſt countenance to error thereby. But what the deſign of them all was, is not the queſtion; we are not concerned with the ſecrets of men's hearts and deſigns; but as the deſigns of ſome of them is plain, ſo the deſign of the act itſelf, which is the thing we condemn, is evident to all that underſtand the goſpel, namely, to undermine and deſtroy it. Mr. Currie alſo, in the above cited place, ſeems to reſt ſatisfied with the explanation of that act 1720 in 1722; (he ſhould have alſo ſaid with the confirmation of it therein, if he had not prevaricated, as Mr. Williſon does, about the title of it;) yet he wiſhes the foreſaid act 1720 had been formally repealed, becauſe it was not *better worded*. And thus Mr. Williſon here ſays now of the act 1722, it is not ſo *well worded* as could be wiſhed. Here is a ſeeming agreement with us; yet under a real difference: for what do we complain of, but that theſe acts are ſo *worded*, as to be in their words directly oppoſite to what the Spirit of God calls *the word of the truth of the goſpel*, Col. i. 5? but theſe brethren condemn the words, and yet juſtify the acts.

2. Mr. Williſon here adds in the forecited page 127. but very faintly, *that he ſhall not ſay, the word* cauſality *is fit to be uſed in aſſerting the neceſſity of holineſs to ſalvation.* But his mentioning only of this, ſays, he falls in with the word *federal conditionality*, as fit enough to be uſed in aſſerting that neceſſity: which bewrays too much of a legal, Neonomian ſpirit. For, without turning the goſpel to a new law, with Baxterians and others, or a new covenant of works, 'tis impoſſible to made ſuch a federal connection between our perſonal holineſs and heaven, as if the promiſe of eternal life were made to our holineſs or obedience, *as ſuch*: which is, upon the matter, a denying that eternal life is promiſed to the perfect obedience of Chriſt our Surety, or at beſt but a halving of the matter between his obedience and ours; and thus it is a bringing in alſo our holy obedience to have even more than ſome kind of cauſality in order to the obtaining of glory; notwithſtanding that he is conſtrained to own, that the word *cauſality* here is improper: for though he ſeems to abandon the word, yet he fixes the ſenſe of it, by allowing the former words, whereof this is but exegetical; for a proper federal condition may well be denominate a cauſe. Of which more afterward.

But again, this good man's legal ſpirit is further diſcovered by what follows. For though he now diſapproves the wording of *that act*; yet, having ſubſcribed, as above, an approbation of it, *he muſt do* his beſt to defend it, eſpecially in that point about the *neceſſity* of holineſs to the obtaining of glory, in the ſenſe of the *act*; *for* this he had inſtanced in his teſtimony, p. 44, and in

to the defence thereof he ſays, (1.) "But I truly believe the ening of the Aſſembly was ſound, and their intention good, [he uld have ſaid the meaning and intention of the act, for this eſially is the queſtion in hand, Whether or not truth was conned there?] viz. to diſapprove every opinion and expreſſion t tended any way to ſlacken our obligation to the ſtudy of holiſs." Here now is a broad inſinuation of the ſame calumny piſts and all Legaliſts raiſe againſt the doctrine of free grace ing through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt unto eternal life, nely, That it is a doctrine of licentiouſneſs, tending to mar d works, and ſlacken our obligation to the ſtudy of holineſs: ile yet, on the other hand, as the faith of this doctrine is the y root and ſpring of true holineſs; ſo, in the righteous judgt of God, never was the generation left to more ſin and unlineſs, than ſince the doctrine of the free grace of God in Chriſt ne under ſuch diſparagement and contempt.

2.) Mr. Williſon proceeds, p. 128. of that Poſtſcript, ſaying, The brethren have not juſt ground for their harſh cenſure of e Aſſembly, becauſe of their ſaying, in explaining the neceſſity holineſs for obtaining everlaſting happineſs, *that it is to be ant only of obtaining the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of happineſs, d not of the right and title to it.*" Now, beſides the hint I have en at this above, they that incline to ſee how this matter is d in the Marrow, in the Repreſentation of the twelve brethren ainſt the Act 1720, in their anſwers to the Commiſſion's queries, d now in the Act of the Aſſociate Preſbytery anent the doctrine grace, all which Mr. Williſon might have had before his eyes; ey cannot but conclude, that his defence of that act on this point, d in theſe circumſtances, muſt flow from the power and prevaice of a legal and Neonomian principle. 'Tis true, he ſpeaks our cenſuring the Aſſembly, as Mr. Currie alſo is wont to do, if it were not acts, but perſons we were condemning. But tho' y know the contrary, yet they have no reaſon to glory even the perſons of thoſe who were the framers of theſe acts, as if y all had had the truths of the glorious goſpel at heart in this ork: For the contrary appeared from this one inſtance following, viz. that, while the twelve brethren were from time to time eeting for prayer, and addreſſing a throne of grace in this ſtate, the framers of theſe acts, I mean the judicatures of the church, ere meeting to make ſport to themſelves, particularly by playg themſelves with the number *twelve*. Hence even the Comiſſion of the General Aſſembly formed *twelve* queries, to be anwered by the *twelve* brethren; and was, it ſeems, reſolved to make p that number, though ſome of theſe queries do palpably coinide. Hence alſo the Synod of Merſe and Tiviotdale, in their *dicial cenſure of the* reverend Mr. Gabriel Williſon's ſermon, *eached before them* anno 1721, intitled, The Truſt, drew up a

charge conſiſting of *twelve* remarks, *twelve* queſtions, and *twelve* ſlanders, relating to that ſubject. Thus the wanton kirkmen took pleaſure to ſport themſelves, though, at the ſame time, diſcovering how ridiculouſly ſtraitened ſometimes they were to find their account. Theſe facts are too notour to be denied, while there are yet hundreds of living witneſſes thereof, beſides the printed hints of the hiſtory of theſe times, and the records of the courts themſelves. And thus, inſtead of being ſet for the defence of the goſpel, and the precious truths thereof, they were ſet upon defending their corrupt and erroneous acts, and upon the demoliſhing of theſe *twelve* men, with an *equal* number of hammers and axes lifted up againſt them; not conſidering how they were lifting up theſe inſtruments to break down the carved work of the ſanctuary, the precious truths of the glorious goſpel, and burying them under the rubbiſh of theſe acts; tho' they might have aſſured themſelves, that truth would ariſe, and appear againſt them in due time.

(3.) Mr. Williſon, *ibid.* proceeds to defend the act 1722, even in its enacting, *That it is dangerous to aſſert, that holy obedience is not a federal or conditional mean, nor has any kind of cauſality in order to the obtaining of glory.* This he defends, by alledging, "we neglected to notice the following explanatory clauſe, namely, *as it ſeems to exclude all uſefulneſs and influence of holy obedience in order of means towards the poſſeſſion of heaven.* This laſt clauſe of the Aſſembly's words, he ſays, plainly limits the ſenſe in which they diſapprove the aforeſaid aſſertion, viz. in ſo far as they ſeem to to exclude the uſefulneſs of holineſs in order of means to ſalvation. Now, this defence will appear to be very weak, if it be conſidered, that though the brethren had put in that clauſe, which he thinks they have not noticed; yet they behoved to underſtand it in the ſame ſenſe with the preceeding clauſe; otherwiſe it would have been quite out of purpoſe for the Aſſembly to have added it: and therefore it was as needleſs for the brethren to notice it, as it is uſeleſs for Mr. Williſon's purpoſe to do ſo: becauſe the order of means towards the poſſeſſion of heaven they ſpeak of, if any way conſiſtent with the former clauſe, muſt be relating to *federal* means, *conditional* means, *caſual* means, towards the poſſeſſion of heaven. And is not this the ſame thing over again? And, (1.) What can be underſtood by *federal* means, but ſuch as are to be uſed in conſequence of the new goſpel law, or covenant of grace in the legal form, according to the Neonomian ſcheme? (2.) What by *conditional* means, when this is by the foreſaid act made the alternative of the other, but ſuch as import the performance of the condition of that new law? (3.) What by *cauſal* means, or means having ſome kind of cauſality, but ſuch a way of repreſenting means, as Proteſtant churches and divines*, knowing the origi-

* See anſwers by the twelve brethren to the Commiſſion's queries.

ral natural bias in all men towards ſeeking ſalvation, not by faith in Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, by which alone we are appointed to obtain ſalvation from firſt to laſt, but by works of righteouſneſs done by themſelves, and the danger of ſymbolizing with Papiſts, and other enemies of the grace of the goſpel, have induſtriouſly ſhunned to uſe on that head? they chooſing rather to call holineſs or good works neceſſary duties of the perſon juſtified and ſaved, than conditions of ſalvation, far leſs *federal* conditions, or cauſes of it; and to ſay that we are ſaved, not *by* good works, but rather *to* them, as fruits and effects of ſaving grace, and union to Chriſt; or that holineſs is neceſſary unto ſalvation, not ſo much as a mean to the end, as a part of the end itſelf, which part of our ſalvation is neceſſary to make us meet for the other, that is yet behind. Whereas the foreſaid way of ſpeaking of means and holineſs, with reſpect to the obtaining of ſalvation, is without warrant in the holy ſcriptures, diſſonant from the doctrinal ſtandards of our own and other reformed churches, and from the choſen and deliberate ſpeeches of reformed divines on theſe heads, and ſuch as may be eaſily improved as a vehicle for conveying corrupt ſentiments anent the influence of works upon ſalvation. Means of grace, according to the goſpel-order, are connected with the end, namely, ſalvation, not as they are proper or federal conditions, nor as they are any way cauſes of it; but as they are the ordinances of God, which he bleſſes according to his own good pleaſure, as he is both the beginning and the end of our ſalvation, the author and the finiſher of it; working in us both to will and to do, completing at laſt the work he began: and all in a way of ſovereign grace, reigning through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt unto eternal life, Philip. i. 6. and ii. 12, 13. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. 37. Rev. i. 8. Heb. xii. 2. Rom. v. 21. 1 Theſſ. v. 9.

(4.) Mr. Williſon ſays, *ibid.* "'Tis uncharitable to charge that Aſſembly with holding opinions contrary to the doctrine of grace, when, in the very act we attack, the Aſſembly profeſs a cloſe adherence to our ſtandards." And then, towards the foot of that page, and beginning of p. 129. he ſets down ſome of the words of our ſtandards, which they aſſert in the act 1722. Now, he knows very well it would be a weak apology for heretics, to tell, that the ſcriptures they repeat and aſſert, are very ſound, while yet the gloſs they put upon them, is moſt unſound. Even ſo it is here: the act repeats and aſſerts goſpel-doctrines, but explains them in a legal ſenſe; as appears from what I have ſaid, and eſpecially from our act anent the doctrine of grace. Hence it is very unreaſonable, to ſuppoſe that a church is ſound, becauſe ſhe has ſound ſtandards; while under them any heretic that gloſſes them to his own mind, and ſo profeſſes an adherence to

them can be allowed to ſcreen himſelf. However, Mr. Williſe reckons, "That, from ſeveral expreſſions of the Aſſembly 172 we may juſtly conclude, that their meaning in the expreſſion quarrelled was ſound; and that they did not mean that a believer' holineſs hath any cauſal influence or virtue to purchaſe heave &c." I muſt ſay, that this defence ſeems to do very little ſervic for ſhewing the ſoundneſs either of the act 1722, or the defende of it; for, as the believer's holineſs may, according to that act, an this explication of it, have a cauſal influence toward the obtainin of heaven, though not by way of *purchaſe*; ſo I queſtion, if th Papiſts themſelves magnify their merit of works, even thoſe t which they give the name of ſupererogation, ſo highly, as to mak them have a *purchaſing* virtue. Their doctrine of merit flow not from their denying the merit and purchaſe of Chriſt, but fro their making the goſpel a new law, with a proper reward of deb belonging to the obeyers of it: and that their work ſhould tha merit, they aſcribe to the merit and purchaſe of Chriſt. Mr Williſon ſeems here to make himſelf and that Aſſembly exclud no cauſal influence that the believer's obedience has to the obtain ing of heaven, except that of *purchaſing* it: and hence it might b ſuppoſed they mean, that it has a cauſality ſeveral other ways It is well known, there are ſeveral kinds of cauſes mentioned b philoſophers and divines; and people are left by Mr. Williſon and the act he defends, to aſcribe any cauſal influence to their ho lineſs for obtaining heaven, excepting only the *purchaſing* cauſe their works may merit by condignity or congruity, or may be th procuring cauſe, the efficient cauſe, the moving cauſe, the inſtru mental cauſe, the formal and material cauſe, or any cauſe me pleaſe to call it, provided it be not ſaid, they are the *purchaſing* cauſe. Surely it requires a deeper penetration into this myſtery than our reverend brother has yet expreſſed, ere that act can b defended as ſound and orthodox, or than he and his adjutant (I mean Mr. Currie) have ever yet conſidered, even in their mo powerful, yet poor attempts to vindicate it. As I doubt not bu moderate Papiſts will be content it be granted by them, that Chriſt merited heaven for them by way of price and purchaſe, if it ſhall be granted to them, that their works merit heaven by theſe other ways and cauſal means above mentioned; ſo I doubt not but any Legaliſts, that are not very groſs, will be content to allow, that their works and holineſs cannot purchaſe heaven; and will reckon they have all they ſeek, if it be allowed, that their works have, by virtue of their new evangelical law, a proper conditional or pac tional and federal influence or virtue to obtain heaven. There fore though Mr. Currie alſo ſays, upon this head, p. 114. of hi *Eſſay*, that the exception againſt the act 1720 was fully taken of *by the Aſſembly* 1722; yet he may ſee now, if he examine the

matter again duly, the exceptions againſt that condemnatory act 1720, and confirmatory act 1722, will never be fully taken off, till they be both repealed, and that many precious truths lie buried there, in the eſtabliſhed church, till ſome reforming Aſſembly open the grave, and vindicate the truth.

Again, Mr. Williſon, in the ſaid page of that Poſtſcript, ſays, That the Aſſembly's ſenſe is plainly this, That as Chriſt's righteouſneſs is neceſſary in the way of merit and purchaſe for obtaining the believer's right and title to heaven; ſo holineſs in the believer (which alſo Chriſt hath purchaſed) is neceſſary in the way of preparation and meetneſs for qualifying him for the poſſeſſion of heaven." This appears at firſt view to be very well ſaid, and if the words of the Aſſembly's act had been in theſe terms, 'tis like they had never been quarrelled on that ſcore; but, as they are applied to that act, and made to have the ſame meaning with it, their meaning and import may be juſtly ſuſpected of error, and particularly the groſs error of confounding the covenant of grace with the covenant of works, and alſo of confounding juſtification with ſanctification: for,

1. The preparation and meetneſs for the poſſeſſion of heaven here ſpoke of, if agreeable to that act, muſt import a federal conditionality, and ſome kind of cauſality in our holy obedience for obtaining heaven. This muſt be the caſe as long as theſe expreſſions ſtand in that act, and as long as theſe words have the meaning that every unbiaſſed man of underſtanding muſt put upon them; for they that are ſound and orthodox, will hardly expreſs the merit of works that could take place in the firſt covenant, under ſtronger terms than theſe, That works had a federal conditionality and cauſality, or were the federal condition and cauſe of obtaining the promiſed reward of eternal life. Now, if the word *condition*, when ſpoken of the two covenants, namely, works and grace, be taken in the ſame ſenſe in both, the one will be confounded with the other, ſays Mr. Stephen Lobb, in his *Peaceable Inquiry*, p. 67. The Popiſh church want no more, but ſuch a confounding of the condition of the covenant of works and grace, to be the ground on which they build their doctrine of the merit of works. And hence the laſt mentioned author cites ſeveral Popiſh authors ſpeaking, one would think, even in more ſound terms than the Aſſembly's act, which Mr. Williſon defends, particularly Alphonſus De Caſtro, *adverſ. hæreſ. lib.* 11. ſaying, "We are not ſo ignorant, nor ſo much elated in our conceit, as to equalize the intrinſic value of our works, which are moſt inconſiderable, with the tranſcending excellency and immenſe worth of the heavenly glory. It is from the promiſe, and the covenant made with us, that our works, which we are enabled through the grace of God to perform, that makes them worthy of eternal life; which ſeparated from the promiſe, wo-

be altogether unworthy. We are therefore wholly owing to the unſpeakable mercy of God for our merit, that he hath made ſo glorious a diſplay of his grace in this, that, when he owed us nothing, he did of his abundant goodneſs, to enrich us, make himſelf a debtor.—Nor let any calumniate us, as if we detracted from the merit of our bleſſed Redeemer; none but they who underſtand not our doctrine can talk after this rate. We have oft declared, it is not of ourſelves that our good works merit eternal life; but we and our works are raiſed to this dignity merely thro' the divine clemency, by which he promiſes to them who obey him eternal life.—And that they are thus raiſed, is through the merit of Chriſt, who offered himſelf a ſacrifice, and prayed earneſtly for all them he knew were predeſtinated to eternal life. From this therefore, as from the chief and principal merit, all grace and glory is derived; and from this it is, that the juſt men and their works are freely ordinated to eternal life." Thia and much more hath Alphonſus about merit *de condigno*, which is highly applauded by Gregory de Valentia, whoſe endeavours are to raiſe it to a merit by the rule of commutative juſtice.—When it is objected to them, That, if the meritorious act be ſo only from the divine promiſe, or God's gracious acceptation, then the reward cannot be to the good work in juſtice, but only in mercy; ſince it may be ſaid that God in faithfulneſs is bound to reward the doer, but not in juſtice; and yet, unleſs God in juſtice be bound, the work cannot be meritorious *ex condigno:* To this objection their anſwer (as it is to be found in *Sancta Clara's Deus nat. grat.* p. 111.) is, "That the fulfilling a *naked promiſe*, is only an act of fidelity and faithfulneſs; but the fulfilling a *covenant promiſe*, which is made on condition as between the maſter and ſervant, where the maſter promiſes a reward on condition of ſuch a ſervice, here, for the maſter to fulfil the promiſe to his ſervant, on performing the condition, is an act of juſtice: which, ſay they, is our caſe." Thus to make good works meritorious, they aſſert a law with a promiſe, and a law turned to covenant; whereof obedience to the perceptive part is made the condition: and thus it is that federal conditionality, or the conditionality of that covenant, on which their merit is founded. And tho' the Aſſembly's act 1722 does not ſpeak of merit, and makes not works to found the right and title to heaven, yet it ſeems only to change the name of *merit* for the name of *means*, and to explain theſe means by the ſame terms that import all that Papiſts underſtand by merit, namely, means of obtaining heaven in a federal, conditional and cauſal way; which is all they want to make their works meritorious, ſo as to *give right* to the reward. So that in this act the merit of works is *taught* under another name; only the merit of Chriſt preferred thereto: which the Romiſh church alſo allows. The ſame author, p. 80. brings in the Arminians explaining the word con-

tion, "Whoſe performance, they ſay, may be called a mean or ſe of ſalvation, and is not only in itſelf full of grace, but grace always neceſſary for the enabling us to perform it, and the reard promiſed thereto infinitely exceeds it." Again, they make "that which, being performed, is a means by which we attain what was on condition promiſed." Hence though, in oppoſion to Antinomians, orthodox divines, and ſuch as have learned ot to confound God's covenant of grace with his method of apſying the bleſſings thereof, have allowed the word *condition*, when ereby is meant only conditions of order and connection, acording to the divine method of diſpenſing his promiſed bleſſings, ne after another; yet, in oppoſition to Papiſts, Arminians, Sonians, and Legaliſts, they have juſtly rejected all legal conditons, ſuch as federal and cauſal ones, which tend effectually to eſbliſh merit, tho' not under that name, and to confound goſpelace with the law of works.

(2.) While it is ſaid, that Chriſt's righteouſneſs is neceſſary in he way of merit and purchaſe for obtaining the believers right nd title to heaven, even this way of ſpeaking, as it is connected, ith the other, is far from being accurately evangelical; becauſe ſeems to cloud the doctrine of juſtification and ſanctification, aking them differ in that wherein they agree, or to agree in that herein they differ.

(1.) It ſeems to make juſtification and ſanctification to differ in hat wherein they agree: for why are they repreſented ſo differnt, as if the title to heaven were owing to Chriſt's righteouſneſs, nd yet the poſſeſſion of heaven were owing to ſome other cauſe? or, ſeeing the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is neceſſary in the way of meit and purchaſe for the believer's obtaining holineſs, and meetneſs or heaven, and for obtaining the poſſeſſion of it alſo, as well as or obtaining the right and title to it; wherein then lies the difrence between juſtification, by which he has the title to heaven, nd ſanctification, by which he has the meetneſs for it, either as their relation to Chriſt's righteouſneſs, by which they both re merited and purchaſed, or as their relation to heaven, and he believers poſſeſſion of it, in ſo far as it is alſo a purchaſed poſſion? For the title to heaven, the meetneſs for it, and the poſſion of it, flow all alike from Chriſt's righteouſneſs, as it is the eritorious and purchaſing cauſe of each of them; which excludes very other federal condition or cauſal influence, beſides this ghteouſneſs, toward the poſſeſſion of heaven. And hence,

(2.) It ſeems to make juſtification and ſanctification agree in hat wherein they differ, as if they did not differ in their materi- cauſe, any more than they do in their meritorious and purchaing cauſe; whereas yet the material cauſe of juſtification, which *alſo the federal condition* of eternal life, is one of the main diſ

ferences between juſtification and ſanctification. But Mr. Williſon's account of this matter, from the act of Aſſembly, does herein confound juſtification and ſanctification, as if they agreed in that wherein yet they mainly differ. Indeed this main difference between juſtification and ſanctification I have not met with hitherto in Mr. Williſon's writings, that I remember of. However, as the material cauſe, or matter of ſanctification, is not Chriſt's righteouſneſs, but our own, not his imputed righteouſneſs, but imparted righteouſneſs, or imputed grace and holineſs in heart and life; ſo the material cauſe of juſtification, is not our righteouſneſs, but Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs itſelf, or his active and paſſive obedience in our room and ſtead, who is the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Our juſtification before God, and ſo our right and title both to grace and glory, ſtand not only upon the merit and purchaſe of that righteouſneſs, as if it were only purchaſed thereby, but upon Chriſt's righteouſneſs itſelf; which is the very matter of our juſtification; inſomuch that the believer has no other legal or federal right or title to heaven, but that very righteouſneſs of Chriſt with which he is clothed. When he has this, he has that which is the federal condition of eternal life, excluſive of all other federal conditions, or legal cauſes of it.

That in juſtification we have a right and title to heaven, and in ſanctification a meetneſs for it, is moſt ſound and orthodox: But then, by ſanctification we enter into the poſſeſſion of heaven, in ſo far as grace is glory begun; and our right and title to this glory is alſo our right and title to the poſſeſſion of it, both here and hereafter. Hence they that believe, are ſaid to *have everlaſting life*, and *to enter into reſt*, John iii. 36. Heb. iv. 3. This ſalvation, commenced here, and conſummate hereafter, is what we obtain only by Chriſt's righteouſneſs; which is the legal ground and the federal condition of our obtaining both a title to, and poſſeſſion of this ſalvation, excluſive of all other legal grounds and federal conditions or cauſes thereof. And though one part of this ſalvation is introductory and preparatory to another, as grace to glory, by the order and ordinance of God; yet we have no other legal way of obtaining one part of this ſalvation, than we have of obtaining another. We have no other right or title to glory hereafter, or the conſummate poſſeſſion of this ſalvation, than we have to grace here, which is the begun poſſeſſion of it: neither has God in the law appointed one part of this ſalvation to obtain the other; as if grace and good works and holineſs were the federal and conditional mean and cauſe of obtaining glory and *happineſs*, or as if one part of this ſalvation, which is wholly *purchaſed* and promiſed in Chriſt, were the federal cauſe of obtaining *another* part of it: for the law acknowledges no good work to

obtaining ſalvation, but ſuch as founds a title to it before the Lord; and that is the doing and ſuffering work of the Surety, his law-magnifying work, or law-fulfilling righteouſneſs, which is the federal condition and material cauſe of our juſtification and title to eternal life, both here and hereafter, as well as the meritorious and purchaſing cauſe of it.

Sound divines have ſhunned, like fire, all expreſſions that favoured of making good works have any cauſal influence upon ſalvation. They have owned them to be *via ad regnum*, but not *cauſa regnandi*: the way wherein believers walk toward the kingdom, but not the cauſe of obtaining it. Our confeſſion of faith to this purpoſe makes them the fruits and evidences of true and lively faith, and ſufficiently expreſſes the neceſſity of them, in ſaying, "That by them believers manifeſt their thankfulneſs, ſtrengthen their aſſurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profeſſion of the goſpel, ſtop the mouths of adverſaries, and glorify God, whoſe workmanſhip they are, created in Chriſt Jeſus thereunto; that, having their fruits unto holineſs, they may have the end eternal life." Some, as Cromayer, affirm them to be neceſſary *ante*, though not *ad ſalutem*; that is, *before, but not unto ſalvation*. Perkins, on Chriſt's ſermon on the mount, ſays, "Some Proteſtants hold them [to wit, good works] neceſſary, though not as the principal cauſe, (as they ſay we are juſtified and ſaved by Chriſt,) yet as conſervient cauſes of our ſalvation. But the truth is, [ſays he,] they are no cauſes of ſalvation, neither efficient, principal nor conſervient, nor yet material, formal or final; as has been elſewhere ſhewed."—"Good works are neceſſary, not as cauſes of juſtification or ſalvation, but as inſeparable conſequents of ſaving faith in Chriſt, whereby we are juſtified and ſaved, or as a way is neceſſary to the going to a place." Rutherford on the *Covenant*, p. 176. ſays, "Yea, but we are ſaved, that is, juſtified, and delivered from the obligation to wrath, by the works of free grace. He anſwers, Nay; but neither are we ſaved nor juſtified by theſe works of grace, as by means or cauſes; for we are firſt ſaved and juſtified, before we can do good works: for good works are the fruits of free grace, ſince we are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus (and ſo juſtified and ſaved in Chriſt Jeſus) to good works, that we ſhould walk in them." For which he refers to the learned commentator Trochrig, on Eph. i. 8, 9. Thus Davidſon's ordinary catechiſm, p. 46. 49. "We are perfectly ſaved by the words whilk Chriſt did for us in his own perſon, and na ways by the good works whilk he works in us with and after faith. *Queſt.* Reſts there any thing for us to do, after that we are perfectly juſtified in God's ſight by faith in Chriſt? *Anſw.* Yes, very mickle; albeit na ways to *merit ſalvation, but only* to witneſs, by the effects of thankfulneſs, *that we are truly* ſaved."

Men's owning Chriſt's righteouſneſs to be the meritorious cauſe of juſtification, does not free them from the charge of maintaining juſtification by works, or (as the apoſtle ſays, Rom. ix. 32.) *as it were by the works of the law*, while they do in any ſenſe require another righteouſneſs, diſtinct from that of Chriſt, in order to the *obtaining* the poſſeſſion of that inheritance, of which believers have already *obtained* both the title and the begun poſſeſſion, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; *by whom* alone *God hath appointed them to obtain ſalvation*, 1 Theſſ. v. 9. 'Tis true, believers in Chriſt are obliged ſtill to uſe the means of grace, and to ſeek after more and more meetneſs to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light; which meetneſs they are alſo ſaid to have already, and ought to be thankful to God for, Col. i. 12. But, when theſe means are required as federal conditions or cauſes of obtaining the poſſeſſion of that inheritance, then this ſuppoſes a new federal paction, and neceſſarily imports ſuch a confounding of juſtification and ſanctification, as that, though his doctrine aſcribes to Chriſt's juſtifying righteouſneſs, the *merit of price and purchaſe*; yet at the ſame time it aſcribes to our own ſanctifying and qualifying righteouſneſs, *the merit of paction*; and that becauſe this doctrine either denies or conceals the *material cauſe* of juſtification, which is Chriſt's righteouſneſs itſelf, and not merely what it hath merited and purchaſed. This righteouſneſs of Chriſt, with which every true believer is clothed, is the only federal condition and cauſe of his obtaining the poſſeſſion of heaven, even as it is the all and whole of the right and title he has to it.

The law of eternal life and death was irreverſibly ſtated and declared only in the covenant of works; whereof the condition was perfect obedience, to which eternal life was promiſed, and the penalty in caſe of diſobedience, was death, according to the threatening thereof. And though we be changed, having by ſin forfeited the life promiſed, and incurred the penalty threatened, yet that covenant ſtands unchangeable. And as, by virtue of the ſtability of it, all the Chriſtleſs world are condemned, curſed, and die eternally; ſo, by virtue of its being perfectly fulfilled by Chriſt as our Surety, (in whom alone it ſtands faſt as a covenant of works to him, and of grace to us in him,) whoſe obedience unto death was the only federal condition of the covenant of grace, anſwering both the DO and DIE of the covenant of works, all that are in him are freed from that condemnation, and live eternally; having in him, not only a legal ſecurity from death, to the honour of divine juſtice fully ſatisfied by his *blood*, as it is the *blood of atonement*, anſwering the penalty of *the law in* the threatening of death; but alſo a legal title to *eternal life*, to the honour of divine faithfulneſs fully cleared by *the ſame blood*, as it is *the* blood of the covenant; the bedding

hereof on the croſs was the conſummate act of his obedience, nſwering the precept of the law, as a covenant of works, to he obedience whereof only life was promiſed, Rom. v. 12. to he end: inſomuch that the promiſe of life is not made to the eliever's own perſonal obedience, nor to any work of his, except in ſo far as it is a fruit and evidence of his union to him, n whom all the promiſes of God are yea and amen to the glory of God, and to whom alone, or to whoſe obedience alone, the promiſes are all primarily and properly made. No other law was ever given to man with a promiſe of life annexed to the obedience of it, but that law which Chriſt came under in our room, Rom. iii. 21. Gal. iii. 21. and therefore there is no other obedience but Chriſt's can be the federal condition of eternal life, giving the federal right and title to it, and having a federal merit and cauſality for obtaining it. And hence, to ſpeak, as the Aſſembly's act 1720 does of our works as a federal condition of obtaining heaven, and yet to alledge and aſſert, that it does not found a right and title to heaven, nor merit, no not in a federal way, notwithſtanding the performance of the federal condition, is a plain contradiction. The popiſh doctrine above mentioned is more conſiſtent with itſelf, while it aſcribes proper merit to what they reckon a proper condition of the new law or covenant of life by works, to which they turn the goſpel-covenant. From which premiſes, if they could hold, their concluſion is native, that they truly merit by their works, and have federally a right and title to heaven. But the Aſſembly's act maintains in the ſame premiſes relating to the federal conditionality of works to the obtaining of heaven, and yet denies the concluſion; alledging they neither merit, nor found a right and title: whereas that they do ſo federally, ſeems to be a native conſequence of that doctrine; and to deny it, ſeems very abſurd.

'Tis vain for Mr. Williſon here to ſpeak, as if more was meant by that act, but that in juſtification we have a title, in ſanctification a meetneſs for heaven: for, if that meetneſs is explained, by the Aſſembly's act, to be a federal condition and cauſe of obtaining heaven, and the poſſeſſion of it, and yet that federal condition giving no federal right or title, nor having any federal merit upon performing of the condition, then it is, in my opinion, either irreconcileable with good ſenſe, or elſe muſt import a twofold right and title to heaven; one by Chriſt's purchaſe, which the believer has in juſtification; and another by his own works and holineſs in ſanctification. Theſe brethren therefore have more ado than they are aware of, ere they can clear that act of error and heterodoxy, and make it agreeable to, and *conſonant with goſpel-truth*. Nay, their attempting to do ſo, *makes them neceſſarily* confound the covenant of grace with

the covenant of works, and juſtification with ſanctification; while that act, and their explication of it hitherto, aſcribes *more to ſanctification* than belongs to it, namely, that the works it influences unto, have a federal conditionality for obtaining heaven; and alſo *leſs to juſtification* than belongs to it, while therein the juſtifying righteouſneſs of Chriſt is made only the meritorious purchaſing cauſe of it, and of the believer's right and title to heaven, but not the material cauſe of it, as it is Chriſt's obedience in our room; the proper and federal condition of the covenant giving a federal right and title to eternal life, and that inſtantly and actually, whenever it is imputed to us, and received by faith. Juſtification ſtands upon a righteouſneſs through which the grace of God reigns to the eternal life of believers, and to the honour of all God's other attributes; while here a merciful God provides both for his own honour as a Lawgiver, and alſo for the honour and credit of his *law*, that it might be magnified and made honourable: on which account *the Lord is well pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake*; wherein he has not only provided a ſatisfaction to his *juſtice* in clearing the penalty of the law, that threatened death to the tranſgreſſor; but alſo a vindication of his *holineſs*, by a perfect obedience to the precept of the law; together with a manifeſtation of his *truth* and *faithfulneſs* in accompliſhing the promiſe of life made to perfect obedience as the condition of it, which was to ſtand in the perſon of the *firſt Adam*, according to the covenant of works, but in the perſon of the Surety, the *ſecond Adam*, according to the covenant of grace. Hence the believer's right and title to heaven, that he has in his new covenant-head by juſtification, does not only nor properly ſtand upon this meritorious purchaſe, or merit and purchaſe they ſpeak of; but properly upon what they omit, the perfect obedience of Chriſt to the law as a covenant, giving them that right and title to life, according to the federal paction in their head, fulfilling the federal condition in their room and place.

But the Aſſembly's act, according to Mr. Williſon's gloſs upon it, having mentioned only the *meritorious* and *purchaſing cauſe* of juſtification, whereby Chriſt's righteouſneſs is ſuppoſed to *merit by price*, but paſſing over and concealing the *material cauſe* of it, which is Chriſt's righteouſneſs itſelf, or his obedience unto death, according to his covenant tranſaction with the Father in the council of peace, and whereby he is known alſo to *merit by paction*, and ſo to obtain the poſſeſſion of eternal life promiſed only to his obedience, as the *ſecond Adam*, Rom. v. inſtead of this *material cauſe* of juſtification, and ground of obtaining the poſſeſſion of eternal life, the act of Aſſembly 1722 *ſubſtitutes* ſome other *righteouſneſs* of our own, under the name *of means*, having a federal conditionality, and ſome kind of

cauſality in order to the obtaining the poſſeſſion of it; and ſo opens a door to Papiſts, Arminians, Socinians, and all Legaliſts, to bring in any material cauſe of juſtification they pleaſe, or any federal condition of obtaining the poſſeſſion of heaven they can find in themſelves, and their own holineſs and good works, provided Chriſt's righteouſneſs be reckoned neceſſary in the way of *purchaſe*, as they ſpeak, for obtaining the right and title to it. But, if Chriſt's righteouſneſs be alſo the material cauſe of juſtification, and the only federal condition and cauſe of obtaining the title to, and poſſeſſion of eternal life, then this doctrine of that act, which Meſſ. Williſon and Currie defend, will be found ſubverſive of the goſpel of the grace of God, reigning through the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life.

However therefore Mr. Williſon's gloſs above mentioned may be judged tenible in itſelf; yet, as it is delared to have the ſame meaning with that foreſaid act, even in ſome of the moſt dangerous and untenible terms of it, his ſoundeſt expreſſions in defence thereof may be juſtly ſuſpected of an unſound meaning. For error can never be reconciled with truth; and he that attempts it, will but expoſe himſelf, and wrong wholeſome truth with a mixture of poiſon. 'Tis impoſſible for Meſſ. Williſon and Currie, as long as theſe acts condemning ſo many precious truths ſtand unrepealed, to ſhut the door that has been opened thereby to Arminian, Socinian, and other errors. Before theſe brethren can vindicate that act of Aſſembly 1722, even in that point wherein they have judged it to be ſound, they will find themſelves obliged to defend theſe following points. (1.) That in the goſpel, properly ſo taken, there are new precepts, ſuch as particularly faith and repentance, that were never comprehended or required in the moral law, either directly, or by neceſſary conſequence. (2.) That the law which believers are under, requires good works as a federal or conditional means of, and as having a cauſality in order to the obtaining of glory, and yet gives no federal right or title to it. (3.) That the law, as to the believer, is really neither diveſted of its promiſe of life, nor threatening of death. (4.) That the believer ought to be moved to obedience by the hopes of enjoying heaven, or any good temporal or eternal, by his own obedience, as a federal conditional mean and cauſe thereof. Theſe, and ſeveral other poſitions of the ſame import, the brethren have to defend, that deſign to reconcile that act with the truth of the goſpel; in eſſaying whereof I doubt not but they will be found *to kick againſt the pricks.*

It was declared in the *Repreſentation* given in againſt the act 1720, which was confirmed by the act 1722, That the 5th act of Aſſembly 1720 condemned the believer's plea in anſwer to the demand of the law as a covenant of works for *obtaining* ſalvation; namely, Chriſt's being his righteouſneſs: and the 8th act, evidently in contradiction to that condemned doctrine of the *Marrow*, directs miniſters to preach the neceſſity of a holy life, in order to the *obtaining* of everlaſting happineſs; alſo, that the great doctrine of juſtification was laid down in ſuch general terms as adverſaries will eaſily agree to, without mentioning the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, or the imputation of it, notwithſtanding that a motion was then made, in open Aſſembly, for adding it. But, as the doctrine of free juſtification through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, is what Luther called, *Articulus ſtantis aut cadentis eccleſiæ, the article of a ſtanding or falling church*; ſo 'tis remarkable, that, ſince the time when this great article got ſuch a daſh by theſe acts of Aſſembly, the judicatures of this church, in their public acts and adminiſtrations, have been falling more and more deeply into the mire of error and defection. What matter of lamentation is it, that Scotland has in this reſpect loſt the great name ſhe had once a day, when famed abroad in the chriſtian world for her purity, zeal and conſtancy; and when a foreign divine wrote of her the following encomium!

Gens dilecta Deo, progreſſibus ardua ſanctis,
Natio divina conſtabilita manu.

While the Aſſociate Preſbytery are attempting to do juſtice to truth, they are charged as guilty of doing injuſtice to the Aſſemblies of the eſtabliſhed church: and particularly Mr. Williſon ſays, p. 129. "That our cenſure againſt the Aſſembly's doctrine is very unjuſt, and unbecoming the duty of children to their mother." But as it is evident, we cannot do a greater act of juſtice, nay nor of kinder ſervice to a church, than by endeavouring to do juſtice to truth, when any way injured by her; ſo we are ſure, that our mother-church is only ſhe that is the pillar and ground of truth: for in as far as ſhe maintains and ſupports error, ſhe is not a mother, but a murderer. Error was never the mother of one child of God to this day; for *of his own will begat he us by the word of truth*. Neither can it be ſuppoſed, that we are faithful to God, to his truth, to our vows and engagments, nor to our mother church, but in a way of adhering to her covenanted principles, and cleaving to that part of the church of Scotland that are judicially aſſerting and witneſſing for them. But Mr. Williſon and Mr. Currie have thought fit (for which *I pray the* Lord may forgive them) to load our attempt this

way, particularly our covenanting work, with the higheſt reproaches; and repreſent our oath, and bond itſelf, as ſtuffed with as many falſhoods as they pleaſe to enumerate. But, as I am ſure, it were more eaſy for me to anſwer theſe unjuſt and wicked ſcribblings, than it is poſſible for me now to find time and leiſure for it; ſo I doubt not but this will be done to better purpoſe by ſome other hand. We never expected but that our teſtimony for a covenanted reformation would indeed be *tormenting* to many *that dwell on the earth*: but that Mr. Williſon and Mr. Currie ſhould be among the number that were moſt vexed and galled with it, we would never have dreamed ſome time of day. But however they may gain their deſign, ſo far, by theſe their unworthy performances, as to occaſion ſeverals to take offence and ſtumble at the Lord's work among our hands; yet I doubt not but God will carry on his work which he hath begun, and hath remarkably hitherto advanced, tho' it is over their belly; and that this he will do to the glory of his own name, to the good and advantage of this and riſing generations, and to the comfort of all the true born children of this our mother-covenanted church of Scotland.

I might here notice the hideous outcry of theſe brethren againſt what they call our making *new terms of church communion* by that act of ours, February 14, 1744, which they repreſent as a NONSUCH one for ſinfulneſs in a multitude of particulars; which will, I expect, be animadverted on elſewhere. Therefore I ſhall only ſay in general, that, by enacting the renovation of our national covenants with a new bond ſuited to the times, no *new terms of church communion* are enacted by us, but ſuch as were made and exemplified to our hands by the church of Scotland in reforming times, an hundred years ago, by a miniſtry as wiſe, faithful and zealous as any in our day, and ſurely much more ſo than the brethren that now have turned their back upon our covenanted reformation. If they own theſe covenants to be binding upon the Preſbyterian church of Scotland, they ſo far own they are bound to the ſame *terms*, as well as we and our people. Theſe things may ſeem *new* to moſt of this generation, that have been burying the reformation-work in oblivion; though in ſome of our congregations they cannot be reckoned ſo, wherein, at every baptiſmal engagement, the people have been put in mind thereof more than thirty years bygone. If theſe brethren have been, or are deficient this way, as well as the reſt of the backſliding generation, it is no wonder that they cry out as if ſome *new* and ſtrange thing were appearing. But their direct oppoſition to this work, under the notion of new

terms, and their loading it with reproachful invectives, attempting to expose it as an enacting of *sinful terms* of communion, serve only to shew, how openly they are breaking God's bands, and casting his cords from them, to the stumbling and hardening of a perfidious generation, against which God is threatening a SWORD to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. If these brethren had cast but a favourable eye upon that foresaid act of Presbytery, they would have seen we made no absolute rule for our people therein, without an exception, excluding them all from sealing ordinances at the rights, that could not instantly see their duty in this matter; and that the act lays down rules of tenderness towards weaklings in the flock of Christ, if they do not evidence a malignant spirit of enmity against the work, but a friendly disposition thereto. But these things our censorious and inveighing brethren found not to their purpose to notice, when they were resolved to make the great work among our hands appear as odious as their pens were capable to do. But their work and ours both must come under another examination. *The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is*; and whether the materials wherewith they build upon the foundation laid in Zion, be *gold, silver and precious stones*, or *wood, hay and stubble*.

I shall now shut up this essay, by noticing the palpable falsehood Mr. Willison advances relating to the act 1722, confirming and explaining the act 1720, by which the *Marrow of Modern Divinity* was condemned. He says, p. 128. "'Tis surprising, that this heavy charge against that Assembly has been dormant for 22 years, until the most part of that Assembly are in their graves; and that they did not openly complain of it at passing the act, but submitted, and lived quietly in the communion of the church so many years thereafter." This I will demonstrate to be such a falsehood, that it is scarce to be supposed but Mr. Willison himself knows it to be so, otherwise his memory has mightily failed him: for not only was that act 1722 witnessed against in many sermons, preached and printed since that time, wherein the errors of it have been taxed doctrinally; but, immediately upon the passing that act, there was a solemn protestation entered against it in the face of that General Assembly, and a guinea of instrument-money thrown down upon the table, by the twelve brethren that were the representers against the act 1720: and tho' it was disregarded by that Assembly, and not marked in their records, (as many other protestations since that time, as Mr. *Willison* well knows underwent the same fate); 'yet it will *stand in record* against them elsewhere to rising generations: *the tenor* whereof follows:

"*At Edinburgh, May* 21, 1722.

"THE General Assembly 1720 having, by their 5th act, intitled, *Act concerning a book*, intitled, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, through an oversight, as we conceived, injured several precious gospel truths; and, in their 8th act, intitled, *Act for preaching catechetical doctrine*, with directions therein, proponed two heads of doctrine, in such manner of expression, as, in the situation of affairs caused by the said 5th act, was stumbling to us; we found ourselves obliged, for the regard we owe to the honour of God, and to his precious truths, and for the exoneration of our own consciences, to give in unto the late Assembly's Committee of Bills a representation and petition to that Assembly against the said 5th act, and some things stumbling to us in the 8th act aforesaid; therein intimating, that there were several other grievances, important in themselves, and weighty to us, the which nevertheless, for brevity's sake, and the uncommon weight of the matter aforesaid, we were constrained to omit the representing of at that time; the which representation and petition being transmitted by the committee above mentioned to the late General Assembly, they did refer the affair to their commission to prepare and ripen it for this assembly; and forasmuch as we did in a regular and orderly way give in our representation and petition aforesaid, and having attended the several meetings of the commission since last Assembly, and, contrary to our hopes and expectations, answered their queries, tending to widen the differences, and put to us by them, even after they had passed an overture, and therein made determinations upon the several heads of our representation; we have in the same orderly manner prosecuted our said representation and petition, before the Reverend Commission and this venerable Assembly, and that, instead of obtaining redress, after the affair has been so long under deliberation, by the sentence of the General Assembly intimated to us, our representation and petition for repealing of the said 5th act of Assembly 1720 is refused, and the said act is confirmed, and no sufficient remedy provided for removing the offence given by the 8th act aforesaid, which gives us too much ground to think, that our moving in this manner for the redress of our other grievances will be in vain; THEREFORE we do, for the truth's sake, and our own necessary vindication, declare and profess, before this Venerable Assembly, That we adhere to our standards of doctrine in this church, to the Confession of Faith ratified in parliament *anno* 1560, and the National Covenant, or Confession of Faith, both which we conceive we are bound to by the superadded tye of the Solemn League and Covenant; as also to the Westminster Confession, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms; and that we are willing to subscribe the three confessions aforesaid as the confessions of our faith; and particularly the Westminster Confession, as it was received by this church *anno* 1647. And further for reasons contained in our representation, and answers to the Commission's queries, both which we adhere unto, and for other reasons to be added, if need be, we do PROTEST, That we look upon the said 5th act of Assembly 1720 as contrary to the word of God, and to the aforesaid standards of doctrine and covenants; and on what we have complained of in the foresaid 8th act, as of dangerous consequence thereto; and that therefore we dare not any manner of way, no not by SILENCE, consent unto, or approve of them, nor the *acts of this assembly relating thereunto*; and that it shall be lawful for us agreeable to the word of God, and the standards of doctrine aforesaid in *this church, to profess, preach*, and still bear testimony unto the truths *condemned, or otherwise injured* by the said acts of Assembly, notwithstand-

ing of the ſaid acts, or whatſoever ſhall follow thereupon. Upon all which we take inſtruments, and crave extracts."

Subſcribed by Meſſieurs

JAMES HOG,	Miniſter of the Goſpel at	*Carnock.*
WILLIAM HUNTER,		*Lillieſlief.*
THOMAS BOSTON,		*Etterick.*
JOHN WILLIAMSON,		*Inverеſk.*
EBENEZER ERSKINE,		*Portmoak.*
GABRIEL WILSON,		*Maxton.*
JAMES KID,		*Queensferry.*
RALPH ERSKINE, JAMES WARDLAW,		*Dunfermline.*
HENRY DAVIDSON,		*Galaſhiels.*
JAMES BATHGATE,		*Orwel.*

Mr. BONNAR, at *Torphichen*, abſent.

This copy of our proteſtations, ſome time after it was given in to the General Aſſembly, was printed at *Edinburgh* that ſame year 1722; and may, I ſuppoſe, bear witneſs ſufficiently againſt the falſhood of Mr. Williſon's alledgeance, that we did not openly complain of it at the paſſing of that act. This proteſtation, as is here ſtands, was drawn up and ſigned with our hands before we were called in to the court; and after we underſtood, that inſtead of repealing the act 1720 they were confirming it: and though, as is ſaid in the proteſtation, the ſentence of the General Aſſembly was intimate to us before we entered that proteſtation; yet that ſentence was not ſo fully notified to us, as afterward it appeared enlarged in print, with the ſolemnity and ſeverity of the cenſures and warnings relating to that book, and us, as contained in that act; otherwiſe 'tis like it had been more uneaſy to us at that time: but the Moderator, in delivering the mind of the court, was more mild and moderate in his ſpeech to us, than to give us any occaſion to think the act would appear in public in ſuch a harſh and rigorous form. Yet knowing that no explication would ſalve the condemnation of truth, and that the 5th act 1720 was not repealed, but confirmed, and that no remedy ſufficient was provided againſt the injury done to truth by the 8th act, we openly proteſted in the foreſaid manner.

And whereas Mr. Williſon here ſays, "That this heavy charge againſt that Aſſembly hath lien dormant, and that we ſubmitted, and lived quietly in communion with the church for many years thereafter;" I anſwer, That though matters were not come at that time to ſuch a height as to neceſſitate us to make a formal ſeceſſion from the judicatures, and to decline them, as afterwards we were obliged to do; yet, while our reverend brother would have it believed, that after that act 1722 we ſubmitted to it, and maintained communion with

the church in their ſubmiſſion to it, we can alſo demonſtrate the contrary, particularly by what follows The Synod of Fife, among whom were five of us that were the repreſenting Brethren for ſeveral years after that act was paſſed, formed queſtions at their privy cenſures, for impoſing a compliance with, and obedience to that act 1722 upon the ſaid brethren, and made an act for a new ſubſcription of the Confeſſion of Faith, in conſequence of, and in an agreeableneſs to that act 1722, in order to bring all their members to an unanimous ſubmiſſion thereto: whi h we who were Repreſenters, unanimouſly refuſed; declaring, at the ſame time, our readineſs to adhere to, and renew our ſubſcription of the Weſtminiſter Confeſſion and Catechiſms, as they were received by the church of Scotland, anno 1647; but by no means as they were by the Synod's act interpreted in an agreeableneſs to theſe acts of Aſſembly 1720 and 1722, in which we ſtill maintained ſo many precious truths were condemned and injured. Thus we alſo ſtood condemned by their acts and had no communion with them in a way of ſubmiſſion thereunto; but remained, while this affair was in hand, not ſo much members of the court, as pannels at the bar, obnoxious to whatever cenſure they might have inflicted for our diſobedience to their *acts*, and diſregard to their *inqueſts*, both in Preſbyteries and Synods. Of which acts and inqueſts with reſpect to us, and all that were ſuſpected to be *Marrow men*, as they were reproachfully called, there are abundance of ſtanding evidences yet in their records. And as our eſcaping the laſh of their higheſt cenſure was more owing to prudential conſiderations among members, than to the tendency of their acts; ſo the diſpoſition of the judicatures appeared too evidently, whenever any ſtudent or candidate was ſuppoſed to be tinctured with the *Marrow*, that is, of a goſpel ſpirit, there was no quarters for ſuch: queries upon queries were formed to diſcourage them, and ſtop their way, either of being entered upon trials, or ordained unto churches; while thoſe that were of the moſt looſe and corrupt principles were univerſally moſt favoured and furthered. Theſe things are too notour to be denied. And theſe were ſome of the ſad, and yet laſting effects of the foreſaid acts of Aſſembly, and the ſad occaſion of planting many churches with men that were little acquainted with the goſpel, yea enemies to the doctrine of grace. Many pious youths of ſound goſpel principles, to whom now a door is opened in holy providence among us had the door of entrance into the miniſtry quite barred againſt them; and we formerly fought many times as in an agony, and fought in vain to have it ſet to them.

But, to return from this digreſſion, I ſuppoſe it will be evident, from what I have ſaid, how much the good man was miſtaken, when he wrote down ſuch a groſs falſhood, as if that act 1722 had never been challenged till now, nor teſtified againſt, but that we had ſilently ſubmitted to it: which I think, for my part, would have been a very ſinful ſubmiſſion. So much am I of this mind, that I have reckoned it matter of thankfulneſs to God, that as I was a repreſenter and proteſter againſt theſe acts 1720 and 1722, ſo I have lived to ſee them judicially condemned.

And I think it is well ordered in providence, that Mr. Williſon hath publiſhed the above falſhood, as long as there is a ſufficient number of witneſſes yet living, to ſhew that it is ſo. And ſome of them perhaps have had, for this very end among others, their life prolonged to this time, that they might declare the truth in this matter, and that poſterity may not be impoſed upon with ſuch groſs falſhoods; which yet are ready to be the more credited, that they are conveyed under the hand-writing of one that was cotemporary with theſe occurrences, and that bore ſuch a conſiderable name in the church; even the reverend Mr. Williſon, who is ſo well known by his many other writings; ſome whereof I hope have been very uſeful, and might have been more ſo, if he had not with his own hand intermixed with them, or added now to them ſeveral things that may contribute much to mar their uſefulneſs and reputation: for as the remarkable enumeration of his works he himſelf makes in a late bitter pamphlet, has not added ſo much to their reputation as it might have done from another hand; ſo every part and point of the doctrine delivered in theſe works has not been ſo univerſally ſwallowed down for ſound truth, as he may ſuppoſe. So true is the common maxim *Nihil eſt ab omni parte beatum.* His preſent attack upon the goſpel doctrine, defended and aſſerted in the Preſbytery's act, has but revived the remembrance of his ſnarling long ago, in ſome of his writings, at the doctrine of the *Marrow of modern Divinity*, that book which God hath bleſſed ſo much good to many ſouls, and particularly was made the inſtrument of the great and worthy Mr. Boſton's illumination; who had a ſpecial concern in the above mentioned *Repreſentation* and *Proteſtation*, and whoſe learned treatiſes and evangelical writings will render his memory reſpected in the churches of Chriſt to the end of time.

What I have noticed above may ſhew, that the reverend *Mr. Williſon's* quarrel at ſome goſpel truths, thro' the want *of more inſight therein*, is part of an old ſore. Which I no-

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in the word of grace and promiſe, and not upon a Chriſt within him, nor upon any created or communicated graces, gifts, experiences, tears, ſorrows, joys, frames, feelings, or whatever elſe that is not God himſelf in Chriſt, exhibited in the covenant of promiſe." This is a mark and ſign of a work that is divine and ſaving, which I ſee not expreſſed nor imported in any of theſe, that either Mr. Webſter, or any other, has mentioned to prove their preſently applauded work to be ſo. Though ſome may think, that what they ſay about the converts they mention, their believing in Jeſus Chriſt, and reſting on him, &c. may import the ſame I here give; yet thoſe that are acquaint with the deceitfulneſs of their own hearts, and partly of the hearts of others, may know, that it is no rare thing to find ſuch believers in the world, whoſe faith in Chriſt is grounded on their faith, and whoſe feelings of ſuch and ſuch inward motions and operations is the ground of that ground: and ſo it is not the true God himſelf in a word or teſtimony, but the God they feel, or have felt within them, they reſt upon, which is not true faith, but mere fancy. Mr. Shepherd, upon the *parable*, p. 198 citing 2 Theſſ. i. 10. "In "ſhall be admired in all them that believe; why? becauſe our teſtimony "was believed, adds, That faith which cloſes with, and ſees Chriſt in a "teſtimony, is that whereby Jeſus ſhall be admired at the world's end." The foreſaid mark of a ſaving work is ſupported by a multitude of ſcriptures, if it be not rather the ſcope of the whole Bible to ſhew that God himſelf in Chriſt, exhibited in the word, and none elſe, nothing elſe, nothing beſide him, nothing from him, nothing with him, muſt be the ground of our faith, truſt and confidence. To illuſtrate this from ſcripture, would ſwell this miſſive to a volume: thoſe that pleaſe may at their leiſure conſult 2 Chron. xx 20. Pſal. xviii. 1. 2. and lxii. 5. 6. 7. 8. and lxxi. 16 and lxxxix. 16. 17. Iſa. ii. 11. 17 20 and xxvi. 3. 4. and xl. 6 7. 8. 29. 30 31. and xlv. 22 23. 24. 25. and l. 10. and lxiv. 6. Jer. ii. 35 36. and iii. 22, 23 and ix. 23. 24 Ezek. xvi. 14 15. Hoſ. xiv. 1. 3. Luke xvi. 15. and xviii. 9 Rom. i 17. and iii. 19 20. 22. 23 24. 25. 26. and iv. 5. and viii. 34 and x 3 4 8 17. 1 Cor. i. 29 30. 31. Epheſ. vi. 10. Philip. iii. 3. 7. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 1.

"As ſaving knowledge empties a man of his own knowledge, making him in his own eyes *more brutiſh than any man, and not having the underſtanding of a man*; ſo ſaving faith empties him of his own faith. Many hope to be ſaved; why? Becauſe they truſt in God; and ſo it is not God but their own faith and truſt in him, they hope upon. But true evangelical faith of divine operation, leaves the man that has it nothing to lean upon but Chriſt in a bare word, a *Thus ſaith the Lord*; it leaves him nothing in all the world to hang by, but the girdle of God's loins, Iſa. xi. 5. the faithfulneſs of a promiſing God, a divine teſtimony: it leaves him neither righteouſneſs nor ſtrength in himſelf, that he may come to the proper language of faith, ſaying, "Surely in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength:" it leaves him "wretched and miſerable, poor, "blind and naked," that he may prize only the *tried gold*, the *white raiment*, and the *eye-ſalve*, that Chriſt has to give him: it leaves him quite deſtitute of, and denied to all good in himſelf, that he may have nothing but what he has in Chriſt. Of ſuch Chriſt ſays, "Bleſſed are the poor: To this man will I look, even to him that is poor."—"Take the beſt hypocrite, (ſays Mr. Shepherd in his *Sincere Convert*,) that hath the moſt ſtrong perſuaſions of God's love to him, and aſk him how he hopes to be ſaved? he will anſwer, I pray, read, hear, love good men, cry out of *the ſins of the time*: and tell him again, that an hypocrite may climb *theſe ſtairs*, and go as far, he will reply, True indeed; but they do not *what they do* with a ſound heart, but to be ſeen of men. Mark now, *how theſe men* feel a good heart in themſelves, and in all things they do *and therefore* feel not a want of all good, which is poverty of ſpirit

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believed ye were ſealed, Eph. i. 13. and the true Spirit of Go
e *believer* leads him to a dependence upon Chriſt

verts, and so powerful is the legal bias of their hearts, leading them to rest upon their duties, graces, frames, feelings and enjoyments, that oftimes it may require many years trial and probation, ere they come to know themselves, and whether God only is their resting place; so that it is not such a proper question, to inquire *what they feel?* as *where they stand?* if it is upon a ground on which they shall be able to stand in judgment, and stand to eternity? As, when Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, it was *to bring us to God;* so, when the Spirit is sent, there is nothing wherein his gracious operation and saving power is more exerted from time to time, than in *bringing sinners to God*, by sweeping away all their refuges of lies, and destroying all their false confidences in any thing whatsoever that is not God. It is no easy matter indeed, but a work of omnipotence, to be thus brought unto God. The power of Satan, on the other hand, is not put forth more any way in all the world, than by leading men to trust and confidence in any thing, be it duties, frames, feelings, or whatever else, provided he can keep them back from such a faith in Christ as terminates upon God, and all the glorious attributes of God in him, according to the gospel plan of divine grace, reigning through his righteousness to eternal life. If Satan has power, he will never suffer a man to come thus to God, and to God only. Hence the saving efficacy of the gospel, when accompanied with the power of the Spirit of God, is expressed by a *turning* men *from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, Acts xxvi. 18. Christ, as Mediator, is only the *great ordinance of God*, for restoring a number of lost sinners, and redeeming them *to God* by his blood; or *the way* by which unholy sinners are again brought back to a holy God, as the only centre of their rest: to which the more they come, the more holy they are; and to which if they never come, they have never any true holiness, true religion, nor true conversion. Hence, as people may be converted to duties, and yet not to Christ, so they may be converted to Christ, and yet not to God by him, nor truly turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

"None of these marks, graces, or qualifications, mentioned by Mr. Webster to be among these whom he takes to be converts, are of a saving nature, if they be not accompanied with that faith which empties the soul of them all, in point of trust, confidence, and dependence on them: for these are but streams, God is the fountain; and he will not give his glory to created streams, so as to share with him as to the ground and object of our trust. Nothing indeed is more easily or commonly said by people than this, *We trust in God; we believe in Christ:* but, if our faith in Christ be built upon our feelings, we dishonour the fountain, deify the streams, and delude our own souls with a fancy instead of faith.

"This mark of a divine and saving work, even as I laid it in my letter to Mr. Wesley, is so essential and discriminating, without it no other mark can be saving. Let a man seem to have all the marks Mr. Webster mentions in his letter, for shewing the work he speaks of to be divine; yet if this one be quite wanting, the work is delusive, and not divine.

"Yea, let perseverance be added to these marks he assigns to his new converts, and let it be supposed they hold on in all these for a good many years, or a whole lifetime; yet I don't see, without this that I have mentioned, that that would prove there is no delusion in the case: for as I find the deluded young man in the gospel had notable perseverence in excellent ways, when he said, *All these things have I done from my youth up, what lack I yet?* so I find most of these we call Quakers persevering all the *days of* their life in a very sober, religious, and seemingly devout way; yet, till I lose my Bible, I cannot find so much charity for them, as to *think they* are true converts, and under no delusion."

END OF APPENDIX.

THE TRUE CHRIST, NO NEW CHRIST.

A SERMON,

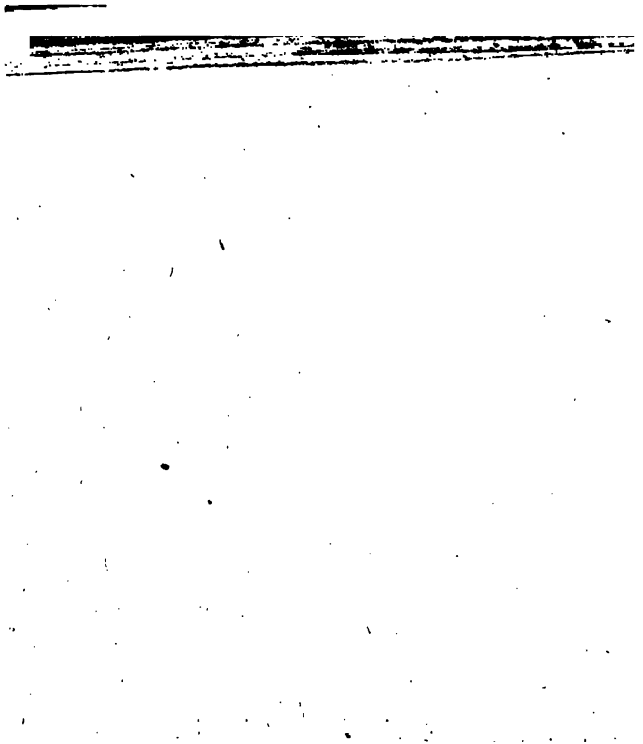
Preached on Monday, August 9, 1742, after the celebration of the Lord's Supper, at Abbotshall.

BY THE REV. RALPH ERSKINE,

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, AT DUNFERMLINE.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

HEB. XIII. 8.



The True Christ, no New Christ.

HEB. xiii. 8.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

MY friends, we live in changeable times, amidſt this changeable world. Many, now a-days, are tempted to change their mind and manners, to change their principles and practice, from better to worſe; and the changes amongſt many miniſters and profeſſors are very ſtrange and alarming. Outward changes are paſſing over us all every day. Yeſterday is gone, and we will never ſee it again; this day is going. Where ſhall we get an unchangeable ground to build upon, and to take reſt to our ſouls in, amidſt all changes both of our outward lot and inward frame? Why, here it is, *Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever.*

The words may be conſidered, 1. In themſelves. 2. In their connection.

If you view them in themſelves, you have therein a deſcription of our glorious Redeemer, who is here deſcribed (1.) In his office, he is Jeſus, a Saviour. (2) In his unction, he is Chriſt, the Anointed, and appointed to this ſaving work, (3.) In his Identity and Immutability, he is *the ſame*; and this ſameneſs of Chriſt is deſcribed under a threefold period, paſt, preſent, and to come; 1. The ſame yeſterday. 2. The ſame to-day. 3. The ſame for ever. Of which more afterwards.

Again, if we view theſe words in their connection, we find indeed there is no particle of connection or relation in this text, to direct us to the dependence of it upon that which goes before or follows; yet the very ſubject matter of it evidently ſhews, that it hath a fit reference both to the verſe before and to the following. In the former verſe, the Hebrews are directed to follow the faith of their ſpiritual guides which had been before them: and this verſe lays down a forcible reaſon to move them thereunto, and the reaſon is taken from the object of their faith, namely CHRIST, who remains ſtill the ſame object of faith; and therefore it behoves thoſe that ſurvive the believers now gone to glory, to follow that ſame *faith, which objectively is Chriſt Jeſus, the ſame* yeſterday, to-

day, and for ever. In the following verſe we are dehorted from following diverſe and ſtrange doctrines; and a ſtrong reaſon to enforce that dehortation is laid down in this verſe, namely, That Jeſus Chriſt, who is the foundation and ſubſtance of all ſound doctrine, continues always the ſame, ſo as they have no cauſe to be carried about with diverſe and ſtrange doctrines. I propoſe then to conſider this text, not only in itſelf, but in its connection; and ſhall endeavour to explain it, in the proſecution of this doctrine.

OBSERV. That it is always neceſſary, eſpecially in ſhaking times, wherein faith is endangered, by new and ſtrange doctrines, to know and believe that *Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever.*

The view of Chriſt's immutability in himſelf, and in his truth, without variation, will influence Chriſtian ſtability in the faith, without wavering. It is a proper mean of ſtability in the faith, in ſhaking times, to conſider, that, *Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.* You may read ſome parallel ſcriptures for confirming and eſtabliſhing your faith of this doctrine. See what a time it was with the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. cii. 8, 9, 10. "Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad againſt me, are ſworn againſt me. For I have eaten aſhes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, becauſe of thine indignation and thy wrath; for thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down." Then ſee what conſideration he is led to, ver. 12, 13. "But thou O Lord, ſhalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations. Thou ſhalt ariſe, and have mercy upon Sion; for the time to favour her, yea, the ſet time is come. Ver. 25—28. Of old haſt thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old as a garment, as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed: but thou art the ſame, and thy years ſhall have no end. The children of thy ſervants ſhall continue, and their ſeed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee." To this purpoſe, ſee Iſa. li. 7, 8. See alſo Lam. v. 16—19. Again, how is John comforted and ſupported in the time of his baniſhment, and in the proſpect of perilous times coming upon the church, but with this name of Chriſt in other words? Rev. i. 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

The method I propoſe for handling this ſubject, through *divine aid,* is the following:

I. We would shew the import of this immutable sameness and identity that is ascribed unto Christ here; or what is imported in his being the same yesterday, to-day, and and for ever.

II. Enquire wherein, or in what respects he is the same.

III. Speak of the necessity of knowing this, especially in shaking times, wherein the faith of many is endangered by new and strange doctrines; or, why it is necessary, then especially, to know and believe that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

IV. Make application of the whole subject.

I. As to the import of this name here given to Christ, which is also, to the same purpose, given him, Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. Here, in the text, you have three distinctions of time, wherein Christ is said to be the same, viz. *Yesterday, to day, and for ever.*

1. The same yesterday. This word is sometimes taken properly, for the day immediately before; as when it is said. John iv. 52. "Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him;" and Acts vii. 28. "Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday." Sometimes figuratively, for the time past, whether it consists of many days or years; as when it is said, Mic. ii. 8. "Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy." OF LATE, in the margin it is *yesterday;* that is, some time ago. Sometimes it signifies of old, whether as to time or eternity; thus, Isa. xxx. 33. "Tophet is ordained of old;" in the margin it is *yesterday.* Hence he is the same yesterday. Under this may be comprised all the time wherein Christ stayed upon earth; all the time from his incarnation till that present time wherein the apostle wrote; all the time wherein Christ was typified in the Mosaical rites, to that wherein these were abolished; all the time that hath past from the first promise made of Christ, Gen. iii. 14.; all the time from the beginning of the world to this day, yea, and eternity itself, as it consists in the expression of *from everlasting;* for, Mic. v. 2. "His goings forth were of old, from everlasting. Prov. viii. 23. I was set up from everlasting."

2. The same to-day. This is the next distinction, and signifies the present time, to distinguish it from the former times. Thus yesterday may signify former times, before Christ was exhibited in the flesh; and to-day, the time since his incarnation; for the word, to-day, is not always strictly meant of a set day, consisting of twelve or twenty-four hours, but may have *a long date;* as when the Psalmist had said, Psal. cxv. 7. "*To-day if ye will hear his voice:*" The apostle, who lived *above a thousand years* after him, applies that to his own

times, Heb. iii. 13. "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day." Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday under the Old Teſtament, and the ſame to-day in the New Teſtament diſpenſation: the ſame from the beginning to his incarnation, and the ſame from thence to the end of the world; and ſo,

3. The ſame for ever; that is, even in the largeſt ſenſe, from everlaſting to everlaſting he is the ſame. "His throne is for ever and ever; and of his dominion there is no end." Change of time, paſt, preſent, and to come, makes no change in him, for he is the ſame. Thus Chriſt is here ſet out, as in Rev. i. 4. "Which is, and which was, and which is to come."

4. To each of theſe relates this ſameneſs and identity. The word rendered *the ſame*, ſignifies *he himſelf*; and implies, that he is ever himſelf, without any alteration or change, pointing out his immutability. There is no tautology or vain repetition in theſe words, though each of them point at his immutability; for his being *the ſame yeſterday*, points out his eternity before time; *the ſame for ever*, points out his perpetuity to everlaſting. Chriſt who is the good old way, is alſo the new and living way, and will always be the way of the redeemed.

His eternal deity is here pointed out, being not only, as God, without beginning and without end, but alſo without poſſeſſion: *Chriſt Jeſus, the ſame yeſterday to-day, and for ever;* What is that, but juſt *I am that I am:* yeſterday *I am.* "Before Abraham was I am?" I am yeſterday, I am to-day, I am for ever; intimating, a perpetual continuing to be the ſame. Thus Iſa. xli. 4. "I the Lord thē firſt, and with the laſt I am he;" or, as ſome tranſlate it, 'I am the ſame;' for it is the ſame word both in the Hebrew and the Greek, that is there tranſlated *he*, and here tranſlated *the ſame*; ſee Jam. i. 17. "With whom there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning;" no ſhow or appearance of alteration.

II. The ſecond thing propoſed was, To ſhow wherein he is the ſame, And,

1. He is the ſame to-day, yeſterday, and for ever, in reſpect of his divine eſſence; for, "From everlaſting to everlaſting he is God," Pſal. xc. 2. See Heb. i. 11, 12. "They ſhall periſh, but thou remaineſt; and they all ſhall wax old as doth a garment, and as a veſture ſhalt thou fold them up and they ſhall be changed: but thou art the ſame, and thy years ſhall not fail."

2. He is the ſame immutably in his counſels. We read, *Heb. vi. 17.* of the immutability of his counſel. Pſal. xxxiii. 10. "The Lord bringeth the counſel of the heathen to nought; he *maketh* the devices of the heathen of none effect. The

counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." Prov. xix. 21. "There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheleſs, the counſel of the Lord, that ſhall ſtand."

3. He is the ſame in his attributes. Pſal. cxviii. 1. "His mercy endures for ever. Pſal. cxvii. 2. His truth endures for ever." Thus his love is everlaſting love, Jer. xxxi. 3. and "His righteouſneſs endures for ever," Pſal. cxi. 3. And ſo it may be ſaid of all his other attributes and properties.

4. He is the ſame in his word, Iſa. xl. 6. compared with 1 Pet. i. 25. "All fleſh is graſs," &c. but "The word of the Lord endures for ever." This is manifeſt both in the law, 'Not one title ſhall fail,' Luke xvi. 17. and in the goſpel, which is therefore called the everlaſting goſpel, Rev. xiv. 6.

5. He is the ſame in his bonds, whereby he binds himſelf to us in the new covenant. As the covenant is an everlaſting covenant, ſo theſe bonds of his promiſe and oath are unalterable, inviolable, and immutable, called the two immutable things, by which it is impoſſible for him to lye, Heb. vi. 18.

6. He is the ſame for ever in his divine perſonality. Indeed *the word was made fleſh*, John i. 14. and he took on him our nature, which he did in the fulneſs of time, Gal. iv. 4. and he made himſelf of no reputation, or brought himſelf to nothing, Phil. ii. 6, 7.: therefore immutablility, attributed to Chriſt, is properly meant of his divine nature, which was nowiſe altered by aſſuming the human nature; for he became man, not by converſion of the Godhead into fleſh, but by taking the manhood into God; ſo as he remained in his divine nature, when he was incarnate, the very ſame he was before, without addition, diminution, or alteration; yet even in regard of his human nature, being raiſed from the dead, he dies no more, Rom. vi. 6. "He continues for ever, and ever lives," Heb. vii. 25. and 'He lives for ever more,' Rev. i. 18. And hence,

7. He is the ſame for ever, in his Mediatorſhip, and in his mediatorial offices. In his prophetical office he is ſtiled an everlaſting light, to inſtruct and direct his people, Iſa. lx. 17, 20. In his prieſtly office, he is called a prieſt for ever, Pſal. cx. 4.; and it is ſaid, "He ever lives to make interceſſion; and it is called an unchangeable prieſthood. In his kingly office he is the ſame for ever; "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," Heb. i. 8. As king, he ſhall reign for ever and ever; and, "There ſhall be no end of his kingdom, Luke i. 33. The government is on his ſhoulders," Iſa. ix. 6.

8. He is always the ſame in the merit, virtue and efficacy of what he *did and ſuffered* for our redemption. In this reſpect he *is called the* Lamb ſlain before the foundation of the world. *The virtue* of his blood was the ſame before it was

ſhed for the remiſſion of the ſins of believers of old, as it is ſince it was ſhed. Hence he is the ſame object of faith, yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. John iii. 14. "As Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs, even ſo muſt the Son of man be lifted up—ver 15. That whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life—ver. 16. For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, might not periſh, but have everlaſting life." He ever was, is, and will be the ſame mean of ſalvation: "There is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we can be ſaved, but the name of Jeſus," Acts iv. 12. He ever was, is, and will be the ſame foundation to his church; "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt," 1 Cor. iii. 11.

9. He is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, in the identity and ſameneſs of the faith of all true believers in all ages. Abraham's faith was ſuch a faith as that of Chriſtians is, and their faith ſuch a faith as his was: ſee Rom. iv. 11. and Gal. iii. 7, 8. And, being the ſame in reſpect of his people's faith in him who is the Head, that body of his people, whereof he is the Head, muſt continue for ever. If the Head is forever, the body muſt be for ever; and on this ground it is that the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt the church. Mat. xvi. 18.

10. He is always the ſame in his truth, in oppoſition to all error, and diverſe or ſtrange doctrines. This ſeems eſpecially to be here intended, as appears by the preceding and ſucceeding contexts: "Follow their faith who were your guides," ſays the texts before; "Be not carried about with diverſe and ſtrange doctrines," ſay the following words. The doctrine of faith is ſtill the ſame; and therefore diverſity and ſtrangeneſs of doctrine is oppoſed to the identity and ſameneſs of Chriſt, whoſe truth is ſtill the ſame in all reſpects. 1. It has ſtill the ſame centre, Jeſus Chriſt, in whom all the lines meet, John xvi. 6. 2. It hath ſtill the ſame worth and value, ſo as they that buy the truth may never ſell it. 3. It hath ſtill the ſame nature. Truth is ſtill truth, and cannot be a lye. 4. It hath ſtill the ſame ſound, which is ſweet and joyful; and, "Bleſſed are the people that hear the joyful ſound." 5. It hath ſtill the ſame virtue when known, namely, to ſet at liberty: "Ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free." 6. It hath ſtill the ſame relation to God, who is the God of truth; to Chriſt who is the Way and the Truth; and to the *Spirit*, who is the Spirit of Truth. 7. It hath ſtill the ſame *end and tendency*, to declare, when it is aſſerted, the glory of *the God of truth*, and to ſhow forth his perfections. 8. It hath *ſtill the ſame* immutable duration in Chriſt, who is the truth, *and who is the ſame yeſterday*, to-day and for ever.

III. The third Head propoſed, Is to ſpeak of the neceſſity of knowing and believing this, That *Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever*, at all times, when faith is endangered by diverſe and ſtrange doctrines. Here I would ſhew, 1. The neceſſity of it at all times. 2. The ſpecial neceſſity of it at ſuch a ſhaking time.

1ſt. The neceſſity of knowing and believing this at all times, That, *Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever.* And,

1. It is neceſſary for diſtinguiſhing Chriſt from all creatures, and from all idols of the nations, and from all falſe Gods and falſe Chriſts. Thus Iſa. xli. 4. He is diſtinguiſhed from all ſuch by this name; "I the Lord, the firſt, and with the laſt, I am he;" and Iſa. xliv. 6. "Thus ſaith the Lord, the King of Iſrael, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hoſts, I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſides me there is no God."

2. It is always neceſſary for evidencing Chriſt to be the true God: Mal. iii. 6. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye ſons of Jacob are not conſumed." To be the eternal and unchangeable God, the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever; and ſo for ſhowing his blood to be of infinite value, as being the blood of God, ſo as we may have boldneſs, in all our approaches to the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus.

3. It is neceſſary for ſtrengthening our faith in all his divine properties, promiſes, and former works. In the view of this immutable name, *The ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever;* we may ſay, as Pſal. xc. 1. "Thou, Lord, haſt been our dwelling-place in all generations;" why? "From everlaſting thou art God." We may, in the view of this, aſſure ourſelves that all the promiſes are in him Yea, and in him Amen to the glory of God, becauſe he is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. We may hence learn contentment, ſince he hath ſaid, "I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee." So that we may boldly ſay, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man ſhall do unto me," Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

4. It is neceſſary for inſtructing us in the ſpecial uſe of God's former dealings with men, namely, in the like good ways of the Lord, to expect the like bleſſings; and in the like evil ways, to expect the like judgments, becauſe the Lord is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. He is ever of the ſame mind. What in former times was right in his eyes, and exceptable to him, is ſtill ſo. Thus, Rom. iv. 23, 24. "Now, it was not written for his ſake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us alſo, to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe in him who raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead." What *formerly offended him* and provoked his wrath, doth ſo ſtill, 1 *Cor. x. 15,—12.*

5. It is neceſſary for aſſuring us of his continual and perpetual care of his church, Mat. xxviii. 20. He hath ſaid, "Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world;" and he will make it good; for, he is the ſame yeſterday to-day and for ever. It may aſſure us alſo of the church's continuance: his church is built upon a rock, and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it, Matth. xvi. 18. There is no enchantment againſt Jacob, nor divination againſt Iſrael.

6. It is neceſſary for encouraging us at all times againſt all attempts of enemies, preſent and to come. Why, God hath ſaid of him, "Sit thou at my right-hand until I make thine enemies thy footſtool, Pſal. cx. 1. He will break them with a rod of iron, and daſh them in pieces like a potter's veſſel, Pſal. ii. 9. In vain do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing. In vain do they ſet themſelves and take counſel together againſt the Lord and his Anointed," &c. Enemies preſent, and enemies to come, ſhall be deſhed in due time; for he is ſtill preſent, and ſtill to come, the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.

2*dly*, I would ſhew the neceſſity of knowing and believing this, eſpecially in ſhaking times, wherein diverſe and ſtrange doctrines appear. Why the need of taking a view of Chriſt, as the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, in ſuch a time, may be evident in the following reſpects:

1. By viewing that Chriſt is immutably the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. In times of error and deluſion we come to ſee the difference between truth and error, truth and deceit; for, whenever Chriſt is diſcerned in this name, we are brought to underſtand ſound and ſaving doctrine, from that which is unſound, new, and ſtrange; in regard, as *Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever*, ſo truth is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. It is one entire ſyſtem, and cannot be divided, one part of it from another, at any time; whereas diverſe doctrines, ſpoken of verſe 9. may be known by their diverſity or dividing of one piece of truth from another, to be unſound, unſafe, and unlike to Chriſt, who is always the ſame. In time of error and deluſion, then, a view of Chriſt, as immutably the ſame, is needful for making the truth evident, as a quite different thing from that which is new, ſtrange, and uncouth.

2. A view of Chriſt, as immutably the ſame, is needful at ſuch ſeaſons, for eſtabliſhing in the faith of the truth, and continuing in the faith, grounded and ſettled, and not being moved away from the hope of the goſpel, Col. i. 2, 3. by whatever ſhaking wind: for a view of Chriſt, as the ſame yeſterday, *to-day*, and for ever, and of his truth, as ſtill the ſame, *as ever it was*, this natively moves the believing ſoul to have *the ſame love* to truth as ever, the ſame eſteem of the truth as

ever, the same delight in the truth as ever, and the same zeal and concern for the truth as ever; because Christ, and his truth, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

3. A view of Christ, as immutably the same is needful, in such a time, for correcting our inconstancy, our levity in departing from the truth, and not cleaving to it, but being easily seduced and drawn aside, like those whom the Apostle calls children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive, Eph. iv. 14. A view of Christ, and his truth, as immutably the same, tends to correct this; for this levity then appears to be an affronting of the truth of Christ, as if it were not the same; an affronting of Christ, as if he were not the same Christ that he was; and an affronting of ourselves as changeable creatures, unlike to him, who is invariably the same.

4 The view of Christ, and his truth, as immutably the same, is needful, in such a season, for shewing the falshood and damnable tendency of new and strange doctrine; for if God, and Christ, and truth, be still the same, then a new and strange God, is a false God; a new and strange Christ, is a false Christ; a new and strange doctrine, is a false doctrine. A God that we had not yesterday, is a false God; a Christ that we had not yesterday is a false Christ. *Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever;* therefore a Christ that was not yesterday, as well as to-day, is a false Christ. A doctrine that was not to be found in our Bible, nor taught us in the word formerly, is a false doctrine. Hence the apostle exhorts, Col. ii. 7. "To be rooted and built up in Christ, and established in the faith, as we have been taught." The damnable nature of such doctrine you may see, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction: and many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

There is no false doctrine broached, nor delusive spirit appearing, but, according to that prophecy, it will find many favourers, followers, and entertainers thereof. This made Paul to say, when he saw the levity and inconstancy of people, "I marvel that you are so soon removed from him, that hath called you, to another gospel. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, &c. Having begun in the Spirit, are you made perfect in the flesh?" There is in seducers, a bewitching diabolical spirit, that makes them restless in leading others into destruction *with them:* so the Scribes and Pharisees compassed *sea and land to make* proselytes: they were blind leaders o

the blind: though they were blind, yet they would be leaders. Now, a view of Chriſt, and his truth, as immutably the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever, is needful, for ſhowing the damnable nature of theſe new and ſtrange doctrines, which are doctrines of devils, directly oppoſite to the true Chriſt, who is the only Saviour and Deliverer; whereas every new and falſe Chriſt, is a ſeducer and deſtroyer of immortal ſouls.

5. The view of the immutability of Chriſt, and his truth, as one and the ſame always, ſhews that diverſe doctrines muſt be deluſive, though men are apt to be carried about therewith; for, whereas the doctrine of truth is one and clear, and firm, and ſtable, the doctrines of men and devils are not one, but divers, various, ambiguous, deceitful, inconſtant, and unſtable, and even inconſiſtent with one another. Man being full of vain inventions, there is no certain rule to be found but in God's word; hence we are called to try the ſpirits, whether they be of God; and for this end we need to pray for the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt, without which we may be ſoon drawn into one or other of theſe diverſe doctrines.

6. The view of the immutability of Chriſt, and his truth, is needful for ſhewing, that new and ſtrange doctrine muſt be deluſive. Things are called ſtrange that are not uſual, or that have not been heard of before; but in the God, and among God's people, that is called ſtrange which is not grounded on God's word; for the word of God is that upon which the church of God grounds all her doctrine, and acknowledges none for ſound, but that which is contained therein, founded thereon, and raiſed therefrom. Thus the fire, that Nadab and Abihu offered before the Lord, is called ſtrange fire, becauſe it had no warrant from God's word. Thus the doctrines the apoſtle here warns the Hebrews againſt, under the name of ſtrange doctrine, are ſuch as have no warrant from the word of God, and which the church of God had neither acknowledged nor received.

Now, the immutability of the truth being known, makes it evident, how all diverſe and ſtrange doctrines, doth impeach ſome divine truth or other; how the broachers of them ruin immortal ſouls, and bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction; for Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, is here ſet in oppoſition to diverſe and ſtrange doctrines, intimating, that men cannot be ſaved in any religion, as ſome dream; for if Chriſt and his unchangeable truth be rejected, and diverſe and ſtrange doctines be embraced, damnation, inſtead of ſalvation, will be the end, however right they may reckon their new way: "There is a way that ſeemeth right to a man; but the end *thereof* are the ways of death," Prov. xiv. 12.

IV. The fourth thing propoſed, was the application. Is Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever? Hence ſee,

1. The great diſconformity between CHRIST and us; he is ſtill the ſame, but we are ſtill changing and varying. We ſee, Hoſ. vi. 4. how God complains of us, "O Ephraim, what ſhall I do unto thee? O Judah, what ſhall I do unto thee? For your goodneſs is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew, it goeth away." But what is the way to be fixed in the faith, and fixed in the love of Chriſt? Even to know and believe how fixed and firm, and immutable he is. The ground of faith is unchangeable; but the riſe and ſpring of our unbelieving doubts, and jealouſies, and waverings, is our apprehending upon every turn of the wheel of Providence, as if Chriſt were another thing than he was; as if he were changed in his love, as we are in our outward frame, and he in his outward diſpenſations.

2. Hence ſee the root of error in principle, about Chriſt in his kingdom and government. As the Sadducees erred about the reſurrection, not knowing the power of God; ſo many in our day err about the kingdom and government of Chriſt in Zion, not knowing the ſcriptures, nor the immutability of Chriſt, that his throne is for ever and ever, and that his dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation, Dan. iv. 34. But men are apt to think him changeable like themſelves, and ſo think his government in Zion is arbitrary and ambulatory. Hence Chriſt, as a King, is treated with contempt and mockery. Men put a crown of thorns ſtill yet upon his head, inſtead of a crown of glory and honour; a reed into his hand, inſtead of a ſceptre.

3. Hence ſee the excellency and extent of the object of faith. The true Chriſt is ſo glorious and excellent, that he cannot be ſeen but by that faith which is of divine operation. They that ſee the true Chriſt, (and O Sirs, try your faith by this) they ſee one who is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. Oh! what deluſive ſights of Chriſt do many now ſee! They ſee a beautiful and glorious perſon preſented to their imagination, or to their bodily eye. What a devil, inſtead of Chriſt, is this! But true faith is the evidence of things not ſeen, and the ſubſtance of things hoped for. The faith that ſees Chriſt truly, ſees both what is paſt, and preſent and to come; a Chriſt yeſterday, to-day and for ever.

4. Hence ſee the picture of a falſe Chriſt. Every new Chriſt, that was not ſeen in the Bible yeſterday, is a falſe Chriſt. New and ſtrange ſorts of convictions are to be ſuſpected. If, inſtead of convictions, we hear of convulſions, bitter outcryings, frights, faintings, and foamings, how deluſive is the work! New and *ſtrange converſions* are to be ſuſpected. If, inſtead of conver-

ſions, we hear of ſudden conſolations by voices, viſions, revelations, impulſes and impreſſions, what deluſive work is this! If they are not Bible-convictions, Bible-converſions, and ſuch as the ſaints of God, of old and of late, have experienced according to the ſcriptures, then they bear the image of a falſe Chriſt; for the true Chriſt is *the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever.* His word is an immutable rule whereby to try the ſpirits; therefore, "To the law and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this, it is becauſe there is no light in them." His word is the ſame that it was, his Spirit is the ſame, and his work, upon all that are effectually called, is ſtill the ſame ſubſtantially, becauſe he is the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever. Therefore, work of a different kind ſhews forth but a falſe Chriſt.

5. Hence ſee, if it be ſo needful to know and believe this immutability of Chriſt, eſpecially in ſhaking times, when faith is endangered by new and falſe doctrine, what need there is, at this very day, to be eſtabliſhed in the faith of this truth, That Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever. At this day the faith of many is endangered, and diverſe and ſtrange doctrines are appearing on the field. Many errors have been broached in our day, ſuch as thoſe of Arians, Deiſts, Arminians, Socinians, Pelagians, &c. But never, I think, did Satan appear as an angel of light, ſo evidently, as in a deluſive ſpirit that is now ſpreading through the land. But whatever glorious ſhew and appearance of religion it makes, if it can be proved, that the language and tendency of it is, "Let us go after other Gods." Deut. xiii. 2.; if it lead people to diverſe and ſtrange doctrines, and to a new and ſtrange God, a new and ſtrange Chriſt, that ye never heard of in the Bible, then the deluſion and diabolical tendency of it may appear; ſo as all ought to beware of being carried about with ſuch ſtrange doctrines, that ſtand ſo directly oppoſite to him who is *the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever.* Here, according to the view I have of that matter, I ſhall ſhew you in eight or ten particulars, what another God, and what another Chriſt is appearing in the deluſive ſpirit of this time, (brought in by the inſtrumentality of the forieguer*, of whom we had once ſome grounds for very favourable thoughts and expectations, till we underſtood him more fully; and found him in ſeveral reſpects, a ſtranger to our God, and ſetting up another God.) Why?

(1.) Our God is, according to Pſalm cxxvi. 3. a God that hath done great things for us, and particularly by calling us to *and* working for us, a glorious work of reformation; bringing

* *The perſon* intended here can be no other than Mr. Whitfield, who was *the principal* promoter of this ſtrange work.

us out of antichriſtian Babylon, and helping us to make a happy ſeceſſion from the Church of Rome; for the defence of which glorious reformation, we now own our ſeceſſion from ſuch as are razing it. But the deluſive ſpirit of the times leads people to another God, a new God, that is calling us off from this reformation-work, and all contending or witneſſing for it, and would have it tumbled down as a Babel-building.

(2.) Our God is a God that inveſted Chriſt with the government of the Church, that hath put the government upon his ſhoulders, and anointed him King in Zion, Pſalm ii. 6.; and made him head of the body, the Church viſible on earth, as well as inviſible. But the new God, that now appears, is a God that robs Chriſt of his government in the viſible church, and ſeeks to deſtroy the ancient order and diſciple thereof. But, with relation to this,

(3.) Our God is a God that planted a hedge about his vineyard, Iſa. v. 2. and fenced it with a hedge of government, and walls of diſcipline. But the new God, that appears in the ſtrange doctrine that is a-ſpreading, is for pulling down the hedge. The preſent deluſive ſpirit is the inſtrument of God's wrath againſt a barren apoſtate church, by which God is ſaying, as in verſe 5. "And now, go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedges thereof and it ſhall be eaten up; I will break down the walls thereof, and it ſhall be trodden down; and I will lay it waſte, &c." God ſays this wrathfully, in his indignation; but the deluſive ſpirit ſays it doctrinally, and by way of approbation, making the ſin of ſuch as pull down theſe hedges, to be but a ſmall matter, and what the Lord's people have little reaſon to be concerned about, being none of their ſins, or among the leaſt of them, as ſome expreſs it. Whereas, every deeply awakened and humbled ſoul will ſee and ſuſpect itſelf to be the Achan that troubles the camp and provokes God to leave miniſters and judicatories to ſpoil his vineyard.

(4.) Our God is a God that calls us, Song ii. 51. to "Take the foxes, (the great ones, and even) the little foxes that ſpoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes." To take and try thoſe that ſay they are apoſtles, and are not, and to find them liars, Rev. ii. 2.; to refute and reject them: a God that ſays, "A heritic, after the firſt and ſecond admonition, reject." But the new and different God, that the ſtrange doctrine of the times brings in, is a God that cries up a boundleſs toleration of all ſects, and a liberty of conſcience too, and communion with all ſorts of heretics, eſpecially if they have but the denomination of Chriſtians.

(5.) *Our God is* a God that hates covenant-breaking and

perjury; and who after he hath publiſhed to us his covenant of grace and mercy warrants us to ſhow our gratitude unto him by a covenant of duty and ſervice, whether perſonal or natural. If a perſon vow his ſervice to the Lord, as David did, ſaying I have ſworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments. God hates his breaking of that vow, ſaying, "If any man draw back my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him. If a church or nation vow and ſwear that they will ſerve the Lord and cleave unto him, as Iſrael did, Deut. xxix. 12, 24, 25. God hates apoſtacy from ſuch a ſolemn profeſſion, and threatens a ſword to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. But it is a new and a ſtrange God that ſeeks to have the moſt ſolemn covenants broken, and thinks nothing of involving the land in national perjury; but if our God be the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, he is the ſame God that he was this time hundred years, when he ſignified his acceptance in our covenanting-days, by a remarkable out-pouring of his Spirit, and the ſame Spirit will not ſeal contraries.

(6.) Our Lord who is the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever, leads his people that are converted, to an eſpouſing of, and an eſtabliſhment in the preſent truth, 2 Pet. i. 12.; and to the keeping the word of his patience, and the teſtimony of the time; and to an oppoſition to the defections and corruptions of the times: ſee Rev. ii. 10. 2 John ver. 8. 10, 11. But we hear the new and ſtrange way, that the deluſive ſpirit of the times leads the converts unto, is even the greateſt averſion from, and oppoſition to the teſtimony of the time: and to that which hath been the word of Chriſt's patience, given to us in this land ſince our reforming days. A vile reproach is indeed caſt upon us, as if we would allow none to be true converts, but thoſe that follow us; nor nothing to be the work of God, but what is wrought amongſt us; nor none to be true Chriſtians but ſuch as join in with (what they call) our Teſtimony. Meantime, I know no Teſtimony we have, but what is for and in favours of that work of Reformation, which the Lord's people in Scotland have this hundred years been calling the work of God, and if this preſent work, which is called alſo the work of God, be ſtanding in oppoſion to that work of God, then ſurely we may ſay, that old work and this new work cannot both be the work of God.

(7.) Our God and Chriſt, that we have been acquainted with by the word, leads us to diſcountenance thoſe miniſters who run without being ſent, and that are evidently erroneous; he calls us to beware of their leaven; and to ceaſe from hearing *them*, Prov. xix. 27.; and to mark them that bear down *the work of God*, and carry on the defections of the day, and *walk diſorderly*. But the falſe Spirit of the day leads people

to favour and own them as much, if not more, than even those that are contending for the faith.

(8.) The true Christ is a Christ whose voice was not heard in the streets in a noisy manner, and whose kingdom comes not with observation, outward show, or ostentation. But the new Christ, now upon the field, is with such a noise, that all the supposed convictions and conversions are instantly known and noised abroad, as if some outward motion were among the true marks of inward conviction; and as if heart conversion to God were become as visible and evident to men, in a moment, as different postures and gestures of the body are to the eyes of men. Alas! what delusions are these, if this be the case!

(9.) The true Christ is he that comes in the still, calm voice of the gospel, which alone is the power of God to salvation and conversion, while therein is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith, Rom. i. 16, 17. But the new Christ, the false Christ of our day, appears as it were, in a whirlwind driving poor people out of their wits and senses, beating down their bodies with pains and convulsions, distempers, and distractions, and then sounding into their ear some sudden comfort; for he that, as an angel of darkness, frighted and terrified them, can as soon, as an angel of light, flatter and befool them, even with false-applied scriptures, to chear up their spirits, and cherish their delusive assurance that all is well.

(10.) The true God is a God of order. The true Spirit of Christ is an orderly Spirit, teaching us by his sent servants, and saying, "How can they preach except they be sent?" Rom. x. 15. But the new God, the new Christ, the new Spirit that is spreading, stirs up private persons, yea, even young boys, to preach, exhort, and expound scripture publicly, and so to prostitute the sacred office of the ministry; and so far as the devil gets leave, would make void and unnecessary that regular call and ministerial mission that God hath appointed in his word, declaring that no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron, Heb. v. 4

Other particulars might be added, but these are sufficient to show, that the delusive spirit, that is now-a-days going abroad, and spreading through the whole land, is leading people to another God, another Christ, than we or our fathers worshipped, and not the same God and the same Christ that we and they learned from the scriptures to worship and serve. The temptations of the day, lead men, they say, to Christ; but it is to another Christ, or else (which is blasphemy to suppose) to think that Christ was another thing than he was, another person, another Saviour, another sort of a Lord and King than *he was of old.* But the best antidote against such false Christs,

and ſtrange doctrines, is the faith of our text, *Jeſus Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.* People have need therefore to continue in the faith they have been taught, Col. ii. 7. and to remember the advice Paul gives to Timothy, 2 Tim. iii. 12, 13, 14. "But evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived: but continue thou in the things which thou haſt learned, and haſt been aſſured of, and knowing of whom thou haſt learned them." And [illegible] advice given, 2 John ver. 8. "Look to yourſelves, that we loſe not thoſe things that we have wrought;" or, as it may be read, "which ye have gained."

6. Hence ſee, in the ſixth place, how valuable the truth ought to be unto us, ſince the view of Chriſt, as the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, is given us as an antidote againſt all error, and againſt being carried about with diverſe and ſtrange doctrines. When we are like children, running here and there, toſſed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, and carried about therewith, we forget that Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day and for ever. We ought to be eſtabliſhed in the faith of the truth, in the faith of all ſcripture-truth, becauſe "The word of the Lord endures for ever." But, more particularly,

(1.) In the faith of the preſent truth. The preſent truth in the apoſtle's time, was the truth of Chriſt's being come in the fleſh: for that was the truth then moſt controverted; and if a man brought not that truth along with him, he was reckoned a deceiver and Antichriſt, even tho' he ſhould have preached never ſo many excellent truths, that were not then controverted, 2 John vii. 10. "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confeſs not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh; this is a deceiver and an antichriſt. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your houſe, neither bid him, God ſpeed." The preſent truth, in our time, is the truth that is controverted and oppoſed in our time: if a man be not faithful to that, he will never be faithful in his generation; yea, if a man come and preach never ſo many excellent truths, that are not controverted, he is but a deceiver and an antichriſt, if he bring not the preſent truth, that the devil and the world are contradicting and oppoſing: but if, inſtead of bringing the preſent truth, ſuch as that of Chriſt's headſhip and government in Zion, he ſhall bring the very oppoſite, and be a contradictor and oppoſer of the preſent truth, then we are to look upon him as an antichriſt and a deceiver with a witneſs.

(2.) We ought to be eſtabliſhed in the faith of the leaſt *truth, if any* thing can be called little truth; the ſmalleſt we

can think of is an invaluable treasure. Little truths are like the little pinnings of a wall, they are as necessary as the great stones; for take away the little pinnings, and you loose and dissolve the whole building. There is a close connection between every truth; they are linked and chained together; and you cannot loose one link, but you break the whole chain. They who are not zealously concerned for the least truth, will have no zeal for any truth at all; if they be unfaithful in a little, they will be unfaithful in much.

7. If Christ and his truth, be the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; then see how highly reprovable they are, that are not the same men they were, with reference to all the present truths of the times. Some that have made as splendid a profession of cleaving to all the reformation principles of this church, that we in this land are solemnly sworn to maintain, they are not now of the same mind; they have not the same sentiments, the same profession, the same favour to the truth, that they had. Why, what can be the reason? It may be said, That either they have gone out from us, because they were not of us, 1 John ii. 19. or, they have forgotten that *Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* The devil hath put another Bible in their hand, and so another Christ in their head. But let old truths, Sirs, be highly valued, and not thrown aside for new appearances: for, the good old way is the new and living way; and the old and new way is the everlasting way. What was truth formerly, is truth presently, and will be truth perpetually; for, *Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* But let none be stumbled at the truth, though they should see tall cedars falling into error; for, "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that, in the latter days, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," 1 Tim. iv. 1. Therefore be not soon shaken in your minds, by whatever spirit, word, or letter.

8. If Christ be still the same, then the followers of Christ should study a sameness among themselves, such as is recommended and enjoined, 1 Cor. i. 10. Phil. ii. 2.—iv. 2. There ought to be an identity and sameness amongst all the friends of that Jesus, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Why, all true believers have the same spiritual meat and drink; for, "They did all eat the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ," 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. They have all the same Spirit, and the same anointing that teaches all things. There are diversities of gifts, and degrees of graces, but the same Spirit, and they are said to

have all the same Spirit of faith, 2 Cor. iv. 13.; and should, as members of Christ, have the same care one of another.

9. If Christ be the same to-day as well as yesterday, the same presently as he was formerly; then let him be your present choice, your present portion, your present help in trouble, your present resting-place; and see your present duty towards him, to glorify him on earth, by witnessing for him, and confessing him before the world. Why hath he had witnesses for his name in all ages, and some at this day, and will have some in generations to come? Because he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. O Sirs, study you to be standing witnesses for this immutable Jesus.

10. If he be the same for ever, as well as yesterday and to-day; then see ground for faith and hope for the future. O what ground of comfort is here to believers, against all future changes, that Christ is unchangeably the same. You may not only look back, believer, and reflect upon such and such a Bethel-visit he made you: whatever changes have befallen you since that time, yet you may be sure he is the God of Bethel: he is the same at your worst, that you found him at your best; but you may look forward, and be sure that he will be the same for ever. And as there is no alteration in Christ's heart or disposition in heaven, from what he had upon earth; Eph. iv. 10. "He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things," so his mind will be for ever the same. Fear not future events, whatever is to come. His name is, "Which was, and is, and is to come." Is death to come? so is Christ. Is judgment to come? so is Christ. Is eternity to come? so is Christ. Happy to all eternity is the believer in Christ; for, he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. The promises of the covenant stand fast in him, who is always the same. It was made in him before the world, and will be established for ever.

11. See matter of dread and terror to all the despisers of Christ, and his cause and truth. He that is the same for ever in his promise to believers, is the same for ever in his threatening to unbelievers. He that is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, hath said, "He that believeth not shall be damned. Behold, ye despisers, wonder and perish." The same Jesus that died at Jerusalem, and is published in this gospel, is to come again to judgment: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up unto heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him *go into heaven*," Acts i. 11. His immutable word of truth *hath certified* your everlasting ruin. The irrevocable sentence

will pass against you, "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And the wrath of the eternal God, and the immutable Jesus, will not be for a day, but wrath, like himself, the same for ever.

12. Hence see an evidence of true and saving faith. It is a faith of the same sort with the faith of the redeemed in former ages; the same with the faith of those that are away to glory, "Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation," say the words immediately preceeding our text. It is a faith that follows the footsteps of the flock; a faith that looks to Jesus as still the same, and finds him invariably the same, whenever it renews its acting upon him; though sometimes he may shut the door upon you, for your trial and chastisement, or humiliation; yet, whenever he opens the door, and lets you in to him, you find him always the same Jesus; and that his word is the same, his love the same, his covenant the same, his promises the same, his blood the same, in its virtue and efficacy; his righteousness ay the same for your acceptance; his fulness constantly the same for your supply; his sweetness perpetually the same to endear your heart to him; his brightness always the same to display the glory of God. And here is the relief that faith gives amidst all fears and faintings, "He is God and changes not, therefore you are not consumed." He is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* —Is this the faith you have? Indeed the more you live by faith upon his immutability, the more immutable and immoveable will you be: "They that trust in the Lord shall be like mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." It is a firm faith that stands here.

In a word, here is a foundation for the faith and hope of all the sinners who hear this gospel, and would be saved from the wrath of him that lives for ever and ever; and would wish to be blessed and happy in him for ever. O come to him before you go away from this place. He is the best match, for time and eternity, that ever you heard tell of; and every word in the text is an argument and encouragement to come to him.

1. He is a Jesus, a Saviour, to save you from your sins, and from the wrath to come he is able to save you. And this name Jesus imports an answer to all objections you can make by unbelief, your sinfulness, guiltiness, deadness, stupidness, or be what it will that troubles you; if you would be saved from all these evils, a Jesus is offered to you. O Sirs, will you have him!

2. Consider he is Christ, anointed of God to save, having

his Father's commission; he comes in his Father's name and authority: "Him hath God the Father sealed."

3. He is Jesus Christ the same; he is immutable and unchangeable. Many changes pass over you, and many sinful changes always to the worse; and the last change, by death, is at hand. Would you be secured in an unchangeable Saviour, fixed upon a rock that is immutable? O Sirs, here it is!

4. He is the same yesterday, the same from eternity, being set up from everlasting: the same from the beginning of time: the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: the same Jesus that was promised immediately after the fall; the same Jesus that, in the fulness of time, assumed our nature, and was made of a woman, made under the law; the same Jesus Christ that died at Jerusalem, and rose again, and ascended to heaven; the same Jesus that was the object of the faith of all the Old or New Testament saints that are now in glory, and have believed in him to everlasting life; and therefore the fit object of your faith.

5. He is not only the same yesterday, but the same to-day; and therefore, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." His days are endless, but you have no day but this to reckon upon; yea, not an hour but this, that you know of; nay, not a moment, not a now, but this present now; "Now is the accepted time." Yesterday is gone for ever from you, and this day is going: "Ye know not what a day may bring forth." But since he is the same as he was yesterday, and you will not be the same to-morrow that you are to-day; you will neither be in the same place, nor in the same case, nor have the same offer; it may be, therefore, now or never must you close with him.

6. Consider he is the same for ever; and therefore, if you receive him to-day, you shall enjoy him for ever. You shall find him an everlasting Father, and an unalterable friend. He will be the same to you that he hath been, and will be to all that ever come to him. He will be your everlasting righteousness, everlasting strength, everlasting light, everlasting life, and everlasting all. Neither death, judgment, nor eternity, will make a change upon him. No change in your lot or frame afterwards shall ever make him alter his mind, or his love towards you. You will be happy for ever, because he is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*—May the Lord draw you to him.

EXTRACTS.

From Sermon cxxii. and cxxiv. Vol. 7th, of Ralph Erskine's Works.*

FROM SERMON CXXII.

PAGE 375, &c.

Luke xxii. 31, 32. *And the Lord ſaid, &c.*

Obſ. 4. "SATAN's temptations are very ſubtile and deluſive." His ſieve may be very narrow. His ſifting and winnowing time is a time of great and ſtrong deluſion. Here I would offer ſome remarks concerning Satan's deluſions.

Remark 1. "That there are two extremes to be much avoided, namely, the calling the work of the Spirit of God a deluſion, and the calling the deluſions of Satan the work of God's Spirit." To call the work of God's Spirit a deluſion, and to do it knowingly, is a doing deſpite to the Spirit of God: and again, to call the deluſions of Satan the work of God's Spirit, is an aſcribing too much to the devil; giving him the place of God.

Remark 2. "That the devil is God's ape." Chriſt was evidently demonſtrated to be the true Meſſiah: yet he ſaid there ſhould be falſe Chriſt's; "Take heed that no man deceive you: For many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt,

* In the Extracts here given, our author has an eye principally "upon what was called, *The extraordinary work at Cambuſlang*, which commenced Feb. 18th 1742; and afterwards diffuſed itſelf thro' ſeveral parts of the kingdom, much promoted by Whitfield's miniſtrations, and peruſing his journals; and approved by many, both miniſters and people, and atteſted by not a few as a *genuine work, and remarkable down-pouring of the Spirit of God*, though alledged by others, to be a *deluſion of Satan;* in regard it was diveſted of the poſitive and permanent evidences of a real work of converſion, held forth by the Spirit of God in the ſcriptures: the ſubjects of it being ſtrangely agitated by ſtrong convulſions, fearful contortions, loud out-crying, imaginary fights, viſionary repreſentations, great ſwoonings, foamings, faintings, &c.; which led them off from the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, without them in the word, to build upon ſomething wrought in them as the ground of their hope; filled them with a vain apprehenſion that the Spirit was poured down in a remarkable manner upon the churches, though going on in a deep courſe of defection and apoſtaſy, breeding in them lax principles of religion, and an indifference with reſpect to all profeſſions; filling them with bitterneſs of ſpirit againſt all who did not approve of the work, though never ſo eminent in piety and holineſs.—The event indeed greatly confirmed the allegation; many of the moſt eminent ſubjects of this work, turned out to be *very naughty perſons:* and the work itſelf ſoon intirely vaniſhed."

and ſhall deceive many. There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, a falſe prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſigns and wonders; in much that if it were poſſible, they ſhall deceive the very lect," Matth. xxiv. 4, 5, 24. There are deep things of G and alſo the depths of Satan, that we read of, 1 Cor. ii. Rev. ii. 24.

Remark 3. "That the deluſions of Satan are as large as operations of the Spirit of God." The devil hath his f apoſtles, his falſe comforters, his falſe light, his falſe aſſ ance. He is ſaid to fill Ananias's heart; *i. e.* made his he audacious and bold, as ſome explain it. He hath alſo his f prophecies and fortelling events. The devil told Saul w ſhould befal him. He may know ſome things to come, by velation from God, for the puniſhment of thoſe that ſhall ſeduced. Amongſt the Anabaptiſts in Munſter, when a l was made for all to bring their goods to the common ſto the maids could tell, as Peter did of Ananias, how m every man had hid at home of his goods. See Dent. xiii. 1 "If there ariſe among you a prophet, or a dreamer of drea and giveth thee a ſign or a wonder, and the ſign or the w der come to paſs, whereof he ſpake unto thee, ſaying, Let go after other gods, which thou haſt not known, and let ſerve them: thou ſhalt not hearken unto the words of t prophet," &c.

Remark 4. "That Satan accommodates his temptation the times." The time of the Reformation was a time of deep deluſions of Satan prevailing. The Reformers were viled, as men concerned about the letter, not the ſpirit of goſpel, by theſe that pretended to extraordinary revelation

Hence, they had bitter conflicts, not only with Papiſts, with men that pretended to be more enlightened than Reformers were, and to have high teachings of the Spiri God, even above the ſcriptures. Theſe that did adher the ſcripture, and would try the ſpirits and revelations by were called, *Literiſtas et Vocaliſtas*, "Literiſts and Vocaliſt men acquainted only with the words and vowels of the ſc ture, having nothing of the Spirit of God. Luther was veighed againſt as having publiſhed nothing but *carnale e gelicum*, a *carnal goſpel*. Wherever Reformation-light br out, there theſe tares came up, whereby great diviſions w raiſed, and the Reformation was made abominable and od to the world. Such ſeem to be the attempts of Satan at day, when the ſtandard of a teſtimony is lifted up for a c *nanted* Reformation. The power and policy of hell is *work to bring* any ſuch endeavour after Reformation un *contempt*; which, we are forewarned, Satan may get \

to do, by ſtrong deluſions and lying wonders, as in the fore-cited Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3. Where a falſe prophet is ſaid to give a ſign or a wonder, and the ſign or wonder is ſuppoſed to come to paſs. But obſerve there,

1. The devil's deſign, verſe 2, namely, to ſeduce, ſaying, "Let us go after other gods, which thou haſt not known, and let us ſerve them." Thus the preſent temptations ſeems to be, let us go to ſome other god, or ſome other way of worſhipping God, or ſome other form of church-government and diſcipline, than what we have known and ſworn to be founded upon God's word; let us, after vows, make inquiry, and inquire after ſome new god, new worſhip, new government of the church. Why, here is a new prophet riſen, giving ſigns, and wonders that come to paſs. Here is Satan's deſign But,

2. Obſerve why God permits this. Why, as it may be for hardening a backſliding generation, in his righteous judgment; ſo for trying his people, verſe 3, 4. "The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your ſoul;" whether you will cleave to him and his truth, even when truth is perſecuted, reproached, and brought into diſcredit by Satan's deluſions. O then, Sirs, with what holineſs, humility, and circumſpection ought the children of God to walk in ſuch times of temptations and deluſion, "That they be not ſoon ſhaken in mind, by ſpirit, or by word, or by letter," as you have the expreſſion! 2 Theſ. ii. 2. We are told, that, "In the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing ſpirits," 1 Tim. iv. 1.

Remark 5. "That the ordinary effects of deluſion are violence and confidence."—Violent motions are ordinarily from an evil ſpirit, hurrying the ſoul beyond all due bounds and limits, effecting very ſudden alterations and ſtrong paſſions; whereas, the Spirit of God is more ſedate and compoſed. It is true, the power and efficacy of the Spirit of God is ſometimes demonſtrated by the appearing of fiery cloven tongues, and by a mighty ruſhing wind; but, at another time, appearing in the form of a dove; demonſtrating, that it is ſuch a fire and power, as is conſiſtent with the other graces of meekneſs and humility, and with holy fear and trembling.—Confidence is alſo an ordinary effect of deluſion, ſelf-confidence, and oſtentation. The Holy Ghoſt deſcended in the ſhape of a dove, to ſhew how meek and humble the operations of the Spirit are in theſe in whom he dwells. The deluded are uſually confident, becauſe the deluſions are ſtrong; becauſe they come by way of judgment, *for abuſing former* light, and not receiving the truth in

the love of it. Theſe four hundred falſe prophets, in Ahab time, are thought, by the learned, to have been true prophe at firſt, and ſuch as were of the company and college of the ther prophets; but, abuſing that gift to the pleaſing of me to the ſeeking of themſelves, and ſiding and complying wi the times, they were juſtly delivered up of God to ſuch a fal way; and they were hardened like Pharoah; hardened of G in their deceitful way, as you ſee in Zedekiah's impudence, Kings xxii. 24. when he ſtruck Micaiah on the cheek, ſayin "Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me, to ſpe unto thee?" Spiritual judgments make men ſecure, and fi of ſelf-flattery, and confirm them more to believe a lie.

Remark 5. "That as the ſpirits are to be tried by the ſcr ture; ſo there are ſigns and marks, whereby deluſions of ſ tan may be known, and diſtinguiſhed from the ſaving ope tions of the Spirit."

Queſt. When are impreſſions and impulſes evidently del ſive?

Anſ. Beſide what is ſaid already, we offer yōu the follo ing ſix particulars, for a ſolution of this matter.

1. When the impreſſion carries a man out of his ſphe and turns private perſons to be public preachers, without ing called of God, as was Aaron, Heb. v. 4. in a regular v to the ſacred office: and when one is perſuaded to that wh is good, but without a commiſſion or warrant. Uzzia holding up the ark was good, but he had no commiſſion; therefore was ſlain.

2. When public devotion is brought in and practiſed, the prejudice of our particular callings. God calls men t diligent in buſineſs, as well as fervent in ſpirit, ſerving Lord, Rom. xii. 11. But when one duty excludes anot from time to time, it is deluſive work.

3. When people are perſuaded to duty unſeaſonably unmeaſurably. The righteous bringing forth his fruit in ſ ſon, Pſal. i. 3. God hath made every thing beautiful in ſeaſon. The God of order, by his Spirit, puts not a man u irregular duties.—The duty is not from the Spirit of God is unmeaſurable, no more than that which is quite unſeaſona As duty miſplaced differs little from ſin, if it be not juſt tu into ſin; ſo a man is perſuaded to duty unmeaſurably whe is tempted to ſuch a multitude of duties as to weary out ſpirits, and exhauſt them, to the ruin even of the body. he that came to ſave ſouls, came not to deſtroy bodies.

4. When any truth is advanced, in order to make way *error, for one* truth to the prejudice of another. Devils *confeſs Chriſt* and his truths, to ſerve a turn, Mark i.

Acts xvi. 17. It may be to divide Chriſt in his offices, and to diſparage ſome other truths. He may allow falſe prophets to each ſome things Chriſt has commanded, provided men be not taught to obſerve all things whatſoever he has commanded, as in Matth. xxviii. 20. The devil may poſſibly extol Chriſt, as a Prophet, in his doctrine, that he may dethrone him as a King in his government: for, he cannot endure that Chriſt ſhould reign. He may ſuffer the flowers of goſpel doctrine to be ſpread, upon condition he can get the hedge of diſcipline and government, that ſhould be about God's garden of flowers, overthrown; with a deſign, that the flowers themſelves may be trampled on, and ruined in the iſſue.

5. That which hath no will and inclination to be tried is deluſive. Truth ſeeks the light, and is willing to be ſearched: "Every one that doth evil, hateth the light; neither cometh to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved: but he that doth the truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God," John iii. 20, 21.

6. That which hath a native tendency to promote ſin and ſecurity is deluſion. If it tend to encourage ſin and corruption, whether perſonal or public corruption; and tend to diſcourage reformation, perſonal or public reformation, then it is evidently deluſion: for unholineſs cannot be from the Holy Spirit. Thus, theſe that endeavoured to diſcourage Nehemiah in building the wall of Jeruſalem, ſhewed thereby what a deluſive ſpirit they were of "My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to theſe their works, and on the propheteſs Noadiah, and the reſt of the prophets, that would have put me in fear," Neh. vi. 14. That cannot be of God which oppoſes the work of God, and of reformation.—Again, if it tend to lead to ſecurity, it is a deluſion; "Becauſe thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing; and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 17. Now, they think they are rich, they want nothing; but the Spirit of God thinks otherwiſe, and tells them they want all things.

Remark 7. "That God may juſtly let looſe a ſpirit of error and deluſion." This he may do,

1. To puniſh the ſin of a viſible church in not receiving the truth; 2 Theſ. ii. 11. And for this cauſe, (namely, becauſe they received not the love of the truth, ver. 10.) God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lie."—Pſal. lxxxi. 11, 12. "My people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would none of me: ſo I gave them up unto *their own hearts' luſts*, and they walked in their own coun-

ſe s." I ſhall not ſay how far God may puniſh a church that is corrupt, and will have none of God's counſel, by leaving them to their own counſels; and, when they reject a teſtimony for God, by allowing them to receive a lying teſtimony, and to believe a lie.

2. To glorify himſelf, and wipe off the reproach of his people, by diſcovering them; for, "There muſt be hereſies, that they which are approved may be made manifeſt," 1 Cor. ii. 19.; that they may appear to be men of conſcience.

3. That the truth may be cleared by oppoſition. The oppoſition that the Sadducees made to the doctrine of the reſurrection, made Chriſt clear it from ſome Old Teſtament ſcriptures, wherein we would never otherwiſe have known to have ſought it.

4. To purge out practical errors in his own people. When we have low thoughts of the Scripture, then he lets looſe Deiſts, that we may conceive the higher value for the word. When low thoughts of the Son of God, then he lets looſe Arians to deny his divinity, that we may begin to conceive more highly of Chriſt. When we have low thoughts and wrong conceptions of the Spirit, in his operations, then he lets looſe a deluſive ſpirit, that we may prize and value the gracious and ſaving operations of the Spirit the more.

Remark 8. "That ſpecial direction is neceſſary in time of error and deluſion, and in a ſifting and winnoing time. For clearing this, I here offer theſe four things:

1. Take not truth upon truſt or report, but drink it from the fountain of holy writ; otherwiſe we will err not knowing the ſcriptures.

2. Labour to find the truth, in the good thereof, from your experience; "I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou haſt quickened me," Pſal. cxix. 93. You may as well ſhape a coat for the moon, as fix a man in divine truth, that knows nothing of the ſweetneſs and ſavoury reliſh of divine truth. This and that, and the other perſuaſion, is all alike to them.

3. Fortify yourſelves againſt a time of trial; "Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that you ſhould not be offended; they ſhall put you out of the ſynagogues; yea, the time cometh that whoſoever killeth you will think that he doth God ſervice," John xvi. 1, 2.

4. Take heed of that light which cometh in an hour of temptation; for, though it may be right yet it needs to be well tried; becauſe, at ſuch a time, Satan is buſy to come *ith with wild* fire, that miſleads the traveller. Hence ſpecial *keeping is* neceſſary in the hour of temptation, Rev. iii. 10.;

or then we are apt to favour that light that leads to ſhun he croſs, and to ſide with the times.

When Satan's ſleve is very ſmall, people need a very ſtrong aith. If there be a picture of converſion drawn by the devil s an angel of light, how hard may it be to perceive the depths f Satan? Think not ſtrange, though Satan ſhould counterfeit onverſion; for, I know none of the graces of God's Spirit ut he may pretend to work. And we are ſure he can cite cripture as he did to Chriſt himſelf, Matth. iv. 3,—11.

Queſ. How ſhall I know a ſcripture given by Chriſt, and one iven by the devil?

Ans. I ſhall only here obſerve, that the word that the devil rings in tends always to ſome wicked effect; either to make he ſoul ſecure or deſperate; either to depreſs it too much to eſpair, or elevate it too much to preſumption. It tends ei-her to diſturb and diſcompoſe the ſoul, or elſe to fill it with alſe peace and comfort. But it may be ſtill enquired, What f the ſoul that has been ſeemingly or really convicted of ſin e afterward comforted by the word; how may that be nown to be of God, or to be of the devil? To which we re-ly, We are ſure that Satan may give falſe comfort and joy y words of ſcripture: the ſtony-ground hearers received the ord with joy, Matth. xiii. 20. but conſult the place, in order o find the difference between that joy and the joy of the true eliever, that he gets by the word.

1. The ſeed is ſaid to be received in a ſtony place. The eart of ſtone was never made a heart of fleſh.

2. They hear the word, and anon with joy receive it; no nention is here of their receiving Chriſt in the word. Their udden joy was ſuſpicious, when let in upon a ſtony heart, not aelted with the riſing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, in his lory, upon their ſouls, giving light and heat; the light of life, he light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the mind and nderſtanding, giving life and heat to the heart and affec-ions. Sudden joy without this is deceitful and deluſive.

3. It is ſaid, "They have no root in themſelves;" no in-ard root. True joy is rooted in the inward knowledge of hriſt, and Chriſt revealed in the ſoul. It is rooted in the aith of the Son of God, in whom believing we rejoice. It is ooted in Chriſt the true vine, and built upon the ſure founda-ion.

4. It is ſaid to endure but for a while; like John's hearers, hat rejoiced in his light for a while; for when tribulation and erſecution ariſes, becauſe of the word, by and by they are of-ended: *they turn enemies* and oppoſites to the perſecuted cauſe f *Chriſt, and have no* mind to ſuffer for any ſuch things.

These four things discover their joy to be false and delusive. Though it come by the word, yet, when it hath these four defects, that here the Spirit of God speaks of; then it says, that the word that gives them joy comes not right, but by some evil spirit.

FROM SERMON CXXIV.

PAGE 428, &c.

1 Cor. i. 30. Compared with Rev. v. 9.

5. HENCE see a test and proof of true religion, true conversion, and a true work of God, namely, it is such as is of God, as the first cause; to God as the last end; and through Christ as exhibited in the gospel, and his death and blood, as the means. It is said in scripture, "Some return, but not to the Most High;" they are converted, but not to God. We hear of a strange work spreading far and near, and it is called a work of God. How shall we know if it be a work of God, or a delusion of the devil? Here is a touchstone by which it may be tried: let them assert never so confidently, that they are converted to Christ, yet if they are not converted through Christ to God, it is a delusion; it is a false Christ they are taken up with, if he do not bring them to God, to the love of God, to the fear of God, to the law and testimony of God, to all things whatsoever that are commanded of God. If the spirit that is prevailing, to the conversion of many, convert them to the hatred of the cause of God, and the testimony of the time; convert them to a toleration of all the corruptions and defections of the day, as if there ought to be no witnessing work against these; convert them to an opposition of a covenanted work of reformation, and any appearance for it, and so to an involving in perjury; convert them to a dislike of any truth of God, relating either to the doctrine, worship, discipline, or government he hath appointed in his house. If this be the case then so many conversions, so many delusions of Satan are taken place; for the true Christ redeems us to God by his blood; and true conversion converts men to the knowledge of God, to the image of God, and to all the ways, ordinances, and institutions of God; and it is a false conversion that draws men off from any of the ways of God: and may all the Lord's people be delivered from any such conversions.

Here also we may see a test and trial of all the graces and *operations* of the spirit, if they be true or false.—The know*ledge of* Christ may here be tried: the knowledge of Christ,

would not save you; did not the knowledge of him lead you to the knowledge of God; the knowledge of Christ does not terminate on Christ himself, but is the Midsman and way to bring us to the knowledge of the Father; "I am the way, says Christ; no man cometh to the Father, but by me; and he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father," John xiv. 6. 9.—True faith may be here tried; for true faith in Christ, as it is of God, or of divine operation, so it will not terminate on Christ himself, but upon God in and through him; for, "By him we believe in God." 1 Pet. i. 21.—Love to Christ, if it be true love, and of God as its original, it will terminate upon God as the ultimate end and object of it; hence the true knowledge of Christ is a knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6.—True joy in the Lord Jesus, terminates in God; hence we joy in God, through Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement, Rom. v. 11.

Here is a test of all true experimental religion. True experience leads a man to rest upon no internal feeling of Christ within him: the true Spirit testifies of Christ in the word; and, if Christ be in you, by his Spirit, he will bring you out of yourself, and of all confidence in the flesh, and out of all confidence in internal feelings, and impulses, and impressions, and and will land you in God alone. True experience, like the true Christ, brings no man into himself; no, by no means: he brings us to God; and redeems us to God.

6. Hence see the duty of all lost and undone sinners, that have lost their way to God, and have lost the knowledge of God, the favour of God, the image of God, and the enjoyment of God, *viz.* to accept of a Redeemer, that is come from God to give himself a sacrifice, to satisfy divine justice, to redeem us to God by his heart's blood. You are called to accept of a complete redemption that God brings to you, in order to bring you to God; to God you chief end; to God your chief happiness. Here the treasures of God's grace are opened fully and freely to you that have nothing; only come, and welcome: you that are fools, come and get the wisdom that is of God; you that are guilty, come and get a righteousness that is of God; you that are unholy, come and get a sanctification that is of God; you that are unhappy and miserable, come and get a redemption that is of God. Christ is made of God to you all these things, which includes every thing else that you need. Here the weak may get strength, the blind may get sight, the diseased may get health, the dead may get life, the leper may be cleansed, the Ethiopian may be beautified, the captive may be liberated, bankrupts may get their debts paid; *only come to, and* except of the Redeemer that is come from

God to redeem you to God, and ſent of God to bring to God You cannot come to God becauſe you are weak; and you dare not come, becauſe you are worthleſs; but, "Worthy is the lamb that was ſlain:" and, as God ſent him once to be a ſacrifice to redeem you to God; ſo he has ſent him now as an uſher to bring you to God; that you may come to God by him as the way, by him as the guide and the leader. No matter how great, how atrocious your ſins have been hitherto; though you had all the ſins of Manaſſeh, or Mary Magdelene, or Saul the perſecutor and blaſphemer; yea, all the ſins of theſe that were murderers of the Lord of glory; he who hath redeemed us to God by his blood, by his blood that cleanſes from all ſin, he has come here in his Father's name, who hath ſent him clothed with his veſture dipt in blood, that by him ye may have redemption through his blood, even the remiſſion of ſins, according to the riches of his grace, Eph. i. 7. O Sirs, do you know him when you hear of him? for, faith, and acquaintance with him, come by hearing. Do you know him in his bloody robes? And is it not a robe of grace, grace reigning through righteouſneſs and blood to eternal life? Will you accept of him who is thus come from God, to bring you to God?

"But, ſay you, will he accept of me who wants faith and "repentance, and ſuch conditions requiſite to bring me to God?" Alas! what is this? Behold the malignity of a legal ſpirit, that riſes up againſt the goſpel of the grace of God. What! would you have a faith or a repentance to be a Redeemer to you, inſtead of Chriſt to redeem you God! Would you have a faith to be a Chriſt to redeem you, or repentance to be a Chriſt to bring you to God? Would you have a Chriſt within you in your heart, to the diſparagement of Chriſt without you, and revealed to you in the word? Alas! this legal dream flows from the power of the firſt temptation, "Ye ſhall be as gods. God only is the firſt cauſe and the laſt end of this whole buſineſs of redemption; but ye would be as gods, to be the firſt cauſe yourſelf, you would have ſomething wrought by you, or wrought in you to be the firſt cauſe of your own ſalvation, that God may loſe the glory of the work. But, O proud ſinner, come down from the height of your deſired deity; you are yet deſiring to be as God, but come down to God's foot and acknowledge him to be God, and be content that he only be the firſt cauſe and the laſt end, and that Chriſt be the all in all of your redemption to God. True faith cannot bring itſelf to God, but only welcomes the Chriſt of God to bring it to God. Here, *O ſinner*, you have nothing to do, nothing to make; God has *made all* to your hand; Chriſt is made of God to you redemption; *he is* made of God a redeemer by price, to redeem you.

to God; and a Redeemer by power, to bring you to God. How love you this bargain? Do you accept of it?

Oh, Sirs! what ſhall I ſay? Is there any ſoul here that would not chuſe to be ſwallowed up for ever in this raviſhing myſtery of God? Chriſt, the Redeemer, is the brightneſs of the Father's glory, by whoſe blood you are redeemed to God; that is, both to the God of glory, and to the glory of God: to the God of glory, that you may be glorified for ever in him; and to the glory of God, that God may be glorified for ever in you. O Sirs, this redemption through the blood of Chriſt, is a redemption of God, as the firſt cauſe; and a redemption to God, as the laſt end; and therefore a redemption to be valued, as made of God to you for your everlaſting happiness, and made of God to himſelf for his everlaſting honour: therefore, as ye would not trample on the blood of Chriſt, and as you would regard your own everlaſting happineſs, which is a great matter, and God's everlaſting glory, which is infinitely greater; come, come to this bleſſed Redeemer, and welcome a redemption made of God to redeem you to God, and to his higheſt honour and greateſt glory. And I will tell you good news, if your heart welcome this Redeemer, in his bloody veſture, for this reaſon, becauſe he comes from God to bring you to God; and welcome this redemption for this reaſon, becauſe it is a redemption made and ordained of God, to redeem you to God; then you may be aſſured that God the Father welcomes you into his everlaſting boſom, becauſe his only begotten Son, which is in his boſom, is accepted as God's Sent to you; therefore, ſays Chriſt, with a doubled AMEN, a doubled aſſurance, John v. 24. "Verily, verily, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death to life."

EXTRACTS

From Sermon cxxix. and cxxx. Vol. 8th, of Ralph Erskine's Works.

FROM SERMON CXXIX.

PAGE 100,—6.

Isa. xliii. 12. *Ye are my witnesses*, &c.

4. HENCE see the duty of the day. Why, what are we called to? Sirs, when the enemies are saying, "Where is your God?" When there comes to be, as it were, competitions with our God, the God of glory, when there are, as it were, different-like Gods upon the field; when their God leads them one way, and our God leads us another way. Why, Sirs, how shall it be known whether the God whose worship is God? Why, if it seems to be brought to a question, as it was once, 1 Kings xviii. 21, "How long will ye halt between two opinions? If the Lord be God, then follow him: But if Baal, then follow him." Why, Sirs, we need to enquire at this day, when there seem to be strange Gods and strange principles, strange delusions, strange apostacies from our reformation work; we need to put it to a trial, and see whether Baal be God, or if the Lord is God. What way shall we try it, say you? You are to try it two ways; 1. By what is past. 2. By what is present.

(1.) By what is past. See what the Lord says, in the text here, Isa. xlii. 12, "I have declared, I have shewed, I have saved, when there was no strange God among you." O but enquire, Sirs, hath not God shewed himself in Scotland to our reforming fore-fathers, which carried on a work of reformation in a way of solemn covenanting with God? Did he not declare when there was not such strange gods as there are now? Did he not save, did he not shew his glory, did he not declare his name, did he not manifest himself, so as to pour out of his Spirit from on high at times in remarkable ways! But, to come yet nearer home, hath not God declared his name, and owned his people, by giving sweet experience of his powerful presence among us, even in our day, particularly on solemn sacramental occasions? Hath not the Lord sometimes shewed himself, *discovered* his glory in the sanctuary, even here, before there *were any* such strange Gods, such strange principles and

nions, ſuch ſtrange novelties, diſtractions, and deluſions, now take place? Hath he not ſhewed himſelf? I remember, that at the firſt communion in Dunfermline, after the Lord brought me in his holy providence to this place, he lead me to ſpeak on the back of it in the evening on that word, "The name of the city from that day ſhall be JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, The Lord is there," Ezek. xlviii. 35. Although many here were not then born, yet there are many people witneſſes to atteſt, that from time to time, from ſacrament to ſacrament, God hath been pleaſed to ſhow forth ſomething of his glory; he ſaved, he ſhewed himſelf, he declared his name, before there were any ſuch ſtrange gods among you; therefore, ye are his witneſſes that he is God, that he is the God of Bethel; that he is the ſame God, the ſame immutable God. Whatever changes are now taking place, whatever ſtrange appearances here are on the field, yet know that he is God. *Ye are my witneſſes, that I am God.*

(2.) By what reſpects the preſent time. May it not be ſaid, *Ye are my witneſſes?* What way ſhall it be known at preſent? ſhall allude to a word ſaid, 1 Kings xviii. 24. "Call ye, ſays Elijah, upon the name of your gods, and I will call upon the name of the Lord: and the God that anſwers by fire, let him be God." Let us meditate a little upon this, "The God that anſwers by fire from heaven, let him be God." It may be ſuppoſed that many of the ſtrange gods anſwered by ſtrange fire, by wild fire; I ſay, there ſeems to be ſome very ſtrange fire amongſt Baal's prieſts, Baal's prophets here, that had ſtrange effects on them, as ye ſee verſe 28. "And they cried aloud, and cut themſelves, after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood guſhed out upon them." Why, there was a fire, the fire of hell in their boſom, their god it ſeems was a cruel god, he had no mercy on their ſouls or bodies. Yea, you know it is poſſible for Satan to transform himſelf into an angel of light; and when he is transformed into an angel of light, his light may alſo have heat accompanying it; the heat of ſtrong fancy and imagination. How then ſhall we know what is the fire of God, the fire of the Lord, fire from heaven? I think, we may further allude unto this hiſtory, and examine into the matter, particularly in theſe four reſpects:

[1.] Then, fire from heaven is that which comes in the way of acknowledging of God, as the covenanted God of our forefathers; for, as you ſee it in Elijah's prayer here, ver. 36. "Lord God of Abraham, Iſaac, and of Iſrael, let it be known this day that thou art God in Iſrael." Here he acknowledges God, as the covenanted God of their forefathers, Abraham, Iſaac, and *Jacob*. *The fire then* that comes not this way, but rather is

a way of rejecting and abandoning our fore-father's covenanted God, this ſeems plainly to be ſtrange fire.

[2.] The fire from heaven, it is of ſuch a nature, as it burns up all things that are combuſtible about our ſacrifices. It burns up all things about our ſervices, that we are ready to gaze on and truſt in. What was the effect of the fire from heaven? ver. 38. "Then the fire of the Lord fell and conſumed the burnt ſacrifice, and the wood, and the ſtones, and the duſt, and licked up the water that was in the trench." It left nothing but the ſacrifices to be truſted unto; it left nothing to be ſeen, but God, the inviſible God. It ſeems to be ſtrange fire that does not burn up the ſacrifices, that does not lick up the water, but leaves ſomething to be gazed on, and removes the proper object of faith; and that makes the object of it the ſame with the object of ſenſe and imagination; ſomething viſible to the eye, ſomething perceptible to the imagination. The fire that does not burn all theſe things, is ſtrange fire. The fire from heaven burns up all, that there may be nothing to be a ground of faith, but the great, the inviſible God; for, true faith is a ſeeing him that is inviſible.

[3.] Fire from heaven, is ſuch fire, as inflames men with zeal, witneſſing zeal for God. It makes them acknowledge that the God of Iſrael, the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, is God, ver. 39. "And when all the people ſaw it, they fell on their faces; and they ſay, The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God." And true fire from heaven makes people fall a witneſſing for God, as the people here did for God, the God of their fore-fathers that was in covenant with them. To be ſure it appears to be ſtrange fire, that doth not lead people to witneſs for God, but rather leads people away from witneſſing for our covenanted God, who is Scotland's covenanted God and King, and is rather aſhamed of that name, and want to bury it.

[4.] The fire from heaven, it fires them with zeal againſt the falſe prophets; ver. 20. "And Elijah ſaid unto them, Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them eſcape; and they took them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kiſhon, and ſlew them there."—And whatever was peculiar and extraordinary in this caſe, I am not to inſiſt on; only, it plainly ſhews us, that true fire from heaven fills people with zeal for God, and againſt all the enemies of God, as enemies of his glory; againſt falſe prophets and falſe teachers; againſt all corruptions and corrupters. Then it muſt be ſtrange fire *in our day* that fills people with zeal againſt theſe that are *witneſſing* for God, and for the reformation-work, and that *makes* people cordially embrace and bear with all the intru-

ders and the corruptions, and all the boars and foxes that are in God's vineyard, with all the thieves and robbers there; and that leads people to a countenancing of them, ſtrengthening of their hands, inſtead of witneſſing againſt them. This ſtrange fire that is burning here and there through the land, what is it but the fire of hell mixed with the fire of God's wrath, againſt an apoſtate generation! And if God be ſaying to us this day, *Ye are my witneſſes, that I am God*, let us witneſs for our covenanted God that he is God, that he is King, and that he is our God.

If ye are witneſſes that he is God, your faith and hope will reſt and depend on this leading truth, this truth of all truths, this centre of all truths, 'That he is God:' I ſay, your faith will terminate and reſt upon God the object of faith. He is not the object of fancy or imagination. The object of faith is God, the eternal, inviſible God in Chriſt. It is but a deluſive faith, if your faith does not terminate on God. The object of faith is not Chriſt, but as he is the Chriſt of God; and it looks to God in Chriſt. It is not the word, but as it is the word of God. It is not the promiſe, but as it is the promiſe of God; Yea and Amen in Chriſt, to the glory of God. The object of faith is not the blood of Chriſt; but as it is the blood of God. It is not the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; but as it is the righteouſneſs of God.—Faith looks to God and reſts upon a God. The faith and hope of a true believer terminates and reſts itſelf upon this, 'That he is God;' hopes for eternal life in him, and from him, becauſe he is God, 1 John v. 11. And if God be giving you his teſtimony this day, ſaying, *Ye are my witneſſes*, then you will be giving him your teſtimonial, ſaying, He is God; he is "IMMANUEL, God with us; JEHOVAH, our righteouſneſs."

FROM SERMON CXXXI.

PAGE 161, &c.

John v. 25. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, &c.*

CONCERNING this hearing of the voice of the Son of God, we offer the following ſix remarks.

(1.) The voice of a man ſtrikes the ear with an external ſound; but the voice of the Son of God ſtrikes the heart with an internal efficacy and energy. To hear the voice of the Son of God, then, is not only a hearing with the ear, but a believing with the heart; *The dead ſhall hear*; and they that hear *ſhall live.*

is the perſon of our IMMANUEL. While you look to a Chriſt painted in the fancy, as man, his voice will never quicken your dead ſouls; but when, by faith, you look to the man Chriſt, as IMMANUEL, God man, and liſten to his voice, as it is the voice of the Son of God, then the dead ſhall hear, and hearing, ſhall live.

O cry mightily to God, that the hour which Chriſt ſays is coming, and now is, may not paſs over without your hearing the voice of the Son of God. The hours of the natural day are paſſing; and ſo are the hours of the goſpel-day. The conjunction of the word and Spirit of Chriſt makes up that bleſſed hour, that happy nick and ſeaſon of ſalvation, the time of love, and the time of life; "There is a river, the ſtreams whereof make glad the city of God; this river of the water of life, that proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb: every thing liveth whitherſoever the river cometh," Ezek. xlvii. 9, 10. Therefore, cry for the promiſed Spirit, the promiſed run of that river; "I will pour waters on the thirſty and floods upon the dry ground," Iſa. xliv. 3. There are ſignal periods of the Spirit, and happy ſeaſons wherein Chriſt utters his almighty voice in the word. When ſuch a ſeaſon cometh, it is an hour that is ever to be remembered; it opens up ſecrets that were in God's boſom from eternity, and brings to light the cabinet counſels of heaven; "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God; for our goſpel came not to you in word only, but alſo in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt," 1 Theſſ. i. 4, 5. This is the hour of ſpiritual reſurrection; a greater and a more glorious reſurrection than that of your bodies at the laſt day; even as much greater as the value of the ſoul is above that of the body; and becauſe the bleſſedneſs of your bodily reſurrection depends upon this ſpiritual reſurrection by the voice of Chriſt: and terrible will the voice of Chriſt be at the reſurrection of your bodies, unleſs you firſt hear this vital voice of Chriſt quickening you to a ſpiritual life.—Therefore, O cry to God, that the goſpel hour may not paſs over without a quickening power coming along with the word, making it ſink deep into your heart, as well as ſound in your ear. If a heart-concern of this ſort were created in you, it would argue ſome beginnings of life from the dead, and ſome hope in Iſrael concerning you.

A REVIEW

OF WHAT HAS BEEN CALLED

AN EXTRAORDINARY WORK

AT

Cambuslang, Kelsyth, &c.

BY THE REV. JAMES FISHER,

MINISTER AT GLASGOW.

A REVIEW, &c.

SEVERAL papers having been publiſhed in favour of what has been called an extraordinary work at Cambuſlang, Kelſyth, and other places, it was worth no man's pains to take notice of ſuch of them, whoſe authors were aſhamed to come from behind the curtain; for I am perſuaded, that no man of common ſenſe will regard theſe reflections upon any ſet of men which the author himſelf is afraid to own.

It is well known, from ſad experience, that when once a people are, in the righteous judgment of God, given up to *ſtrong deluſions to believe a lie*, reaſoning with them is entirely needleſs: they will be proof againſt the ſtrongeſt arguments from ſcripture or reaſon, till ſuch time as the Captain of Salvation overcome the ſtrong man within them, and ſpoil him of his armour wherein he truſted; and therefore I had once ſome thoughts of acquieſcing in a doctrinal teſtimony to my hearers as occaſion offered, and not to have appeared in the preſs upon this awful ſubject: But when I obſerved that the preface written by Mr. Robe, and other papers lately publiſhed, were levelled directly againſt the whole of our reformation principles, and yet in ſuch a manner, as that the minds of ſome might thereby be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt, I judged it my duty to contribute my mite for vindicating preſent truth, and contending for the faith once delivered to the ſaints, eſpecially when the ſaid preface, and other papers of the like nature, are ſo current in the place and country where adorable Providence hath ordered my lot.

If Mr. Robe and others had contented themſelves with giving their own private opinion anent the alledged goodneſs of that work, perhaps few, if any, would have much regarded it. But when they ſet up their extraordinary work in oppoſition to the whole work of God, which he has wrought for us in theſe lands; when Mr. Robe particularly challenges the late Act of the Aſſociate Preſbytery, anent a public faſt, as "full of great ſwelling words, altogether void of the Spirit of the meek and lowly Jeſus,—and the moſt heaven-daring paper that

hath been published, by any set of men in Britain, these hundred years past," he says some one or other of the brethren under some kind of necessity to review the grounds of this bold assertion; especially if it is considered, that, when finding fault with the Presbytery, for charging the promoters of this work, with pleading for a boundless toleration and liberty of conscience, he says, "I know none of my brethren ever did it, and I am so far conscious of my innocency, that I insist upon making your charge good; if you do not, as I am sure you cannot, you have given reason to the world to reckon you slanderers." A slanderer is a very odious character; however, if the charge of lax and boundless toleration-principles is made good against Mr. Robe, and other promoters of this work, he has himself to blame, by giving such a rash challenge, to make good what is abundantly notour to the intelligent world.

As I am not afraid, that the bitter calumnies which Mr. Robe is pleased to throw upon the brethren, will do them much harm among the unprejudiced, so I would never have troubled the world, merely with a vindication of them from such aspersions, well knowing, that there hath been abundance of idle and ridiculous stories handed about with the greatest confidence against them, especially since this work began, whereby it is lamentable, that the Father of lies has got so much acceptable service.

But it is the dishonour done to God, and injury to his cause, and the apprehension that I have, that some may be blindfolded and hardened by Mr. Robe's performance, that induced me to take notice of it: and in the review thereof, I shall first examine the evidence that Mr. Robe adduces for the proof of what he calls an extraordinary work of the Spirit of God; and then enquire into the principles of the promoters of this work, especially with reference to a boundless toleration and liberty of conscience; and lastly, to consider his Address to the Brethren of the Associate Presbytery, anent their late Act for a Public Fast. Under which three heads the substance of the preface may be comprised; and I hope the reader shall find, that what shall be said, is written with the spirit of meekness.

No work can be reckoned extraordinary, but what manifests itself to be so by extraordinary signs, and evidences; since therefore Mr. Robe is pleased to call the work at Kelsyth and other congregations in the neighbourhood, an extraordinary work of the Spirit of God, it is reasonable to expect, that he would have mentioned some extraordinary scripture evidences attending this work, which would manifest it to be indeed an extraordinary work of the Spirit of God: But, instead of this, the only extraordinary evidence he gives, is as follows,

Preface, p. 6th & 7th. "This work, ſo extraordinary upon "the ſouls of many in theſe congregations (meaning Kellyth "and other congregations in the neighbourhood) is the ſame "with that at Cambuſlang: the method of the Spirit's oper- "ation is alike in all theſe congregations, the effects of it upon "the bodies of the awakened, which have not been ſo common "at other times, are alſo much the ſame. The bodies of ſome of "the awakened are ſeized with trembling, fainting, hyſtriſms "in ſome few women, and with convulſive motions in ſome "others;" or, as he expreſſes it, page 8th, "faintings, hyſteric "fits, convulſions, bodily agonies and ſtrugglings."

Mr. Robe acknowledges, page 13th, "That as theſe bodily "agitations are no evidences of perſons being under any ope- "rations of the Spirit of God, alſo all perſons under convul- "ſions, cramps, hyſtriſms, &c. would be ſuch; ſo, upon the "other hand, they are no evidence that theſe thus affected are "under a ſpirit of deluſion—Bodily agitations, (ſays he) conſid- "ered in themſelves are no ſymptoms of perſons being under "the influence either of a good or bad ſpirit." Yet the moſt part of his preface is taken up in juſtifying bodily agitations, which indeed are the only extraordinary evidences I can find mentioned of this extraordinary work. What is ſaid in vindication of theſe ſhall be conſidered after I have taken ſome notice of the original whereof the work of Kelſyth is a copy; for he ſays it is the ſame with that of Cambuſlang; concerning which he tells us, page 6th, "This extraordinary out-pouring of the "Holy Spirit, whereby great numbers of ſecure ſinners are "awakened, and many of theſe converted and filled with faith, "and more than ordinary peace and joy in believing, appears "at firſt, and continues at Cambuſlang; a well atteſted narra- "tive of this hath been publiſhed."

A well atteſted narrative of the real work of converſion, upon the ſouls of great numbers, is indeed a bold undertaking, eſpecially if the number is condeſcended upon, as Mr. M'Culloch takes upon him to do, *Glaſgow Weekly Hiſtory*, *No.* 27, he mentions two hundred hopefully converted, and *No.* 30, they ariſe to the number of five hundred, who he believes are ſavingly brought home to God, not including counterfeits, and theſe who have nothing but a dread of hell, of which ſort, he ſays, there have been no great numbers; and likewiſe not including theſe that have been awakened by Mr. Whitfield's ſermons in that place; which is indeed a very circumſtantial and daring account.

The reaſon why a ſober man will ſcarce venture to atteſt the real converſions of multitudes is obvious, becauſe there are many hypocrites in the viſible church, by whom all the outward evidences of grace may be ſo exactly counterfeited, that

the moſt quick-ſighted Chriſtian may miſtake a hypocrite for a true believer; for although a believer may attain an aſſurance of his own particular intereſt in Chriſt; yet all the evidence we have of the converſion of another, being merely external, we may for the above reaſon, be liable to manifold miſtakes; yet the internal diſtinguiſhing evidences are ſo plainly laid down in the word, that none examining themſelves thereby, under the influence of the ſpirit of truth, but will come to diſcern the real and wide difference between hypocriſy and ſaving grace.

There is no doubt, but all the lovers of Jeſus would earneſtly wiſh, there were many thouſands ſavingly converted, for every one that is here alledged; but people are never in a more dangerous condition, than when they perſuade themſelves, and are ſtrongly perſuaded by others, that they are converted, if in the mean time they are in the gall of bitterneſs ſtill: yea, though in the judgment of charity, we thought them in a converted ſtate, yet the ſafeſt way would be, to put them upon examining themſelves, whether they be in the faith. Beſides I find the miniſters of Chriſt, who have been honoured of the Lord, to be moſt inſtrumental in convincing and converting work, have been moſt ſelf denied as to their own inſtrumentality, that he who builds the temple of the Lord may have all the glory. The apoſtle Peter was moſt ſucceſsful of any we read of at one time, Acts. ii. 4. But does he ſend letters to all countries round, to acquaint them, that ſuch a day he had been inſtrumental in converting three thouſand? The Lord was pleaſed to ſend down a plentiful rain of divine influences, during the time of Mr. Livingſton's ſermon at the kirk of Shots; but doth he proclaim it through all the world, that ſo many hundreds were converted at that time by his means? Nay, he draws a modeſt veil over it in the hiſtory of his life. They who did not preach themſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, were not acquainted with this vain-glorious way of dunning the world with the number of their converts.

With reſpect to the work at Cambuſlang, after which that of Kelſyth is ſo exactly copied, all that the well atteſted narrative ſays of it, amounts to theſe three heads: 1ſt. "That it came "after ſuch preparatives, as an extenſive concern about reli- "gion gradually increaſing, together with extraordinary fer- "vent prayer in large meetings, particularly relating to the "ſucceſs of the goſpel." That is the work of Cambuſlang, according to their own account of it, was produced by their extraordinary fervent deſires of the ſucceſs of the work abroad, *whereof Mr.* Whitfield was the chief human inſtrument, and *to be ſharers* of the very ſame Spirit. 2d. After the work was

produced, the Narrative does not determine the ſtate of ierſons, ſo exactly, as Mr. Robe doth, namely, that they eally converted, and filled with faith; it only ſays, page 6, they were awakened to a deep concern about ſalvation, gave a good account to Miniſters, and others of their conns and outgate, which many may do, without any ſaving ge wrought upon their hearts; not every one that ſaith me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, e who doth the will of my Father who is in heaven; by fruits ſhall ye know them. 3d. The good fruits mend by the Narrative, page 7, are outward reformation, in g aſide curſing, ſwearing and drunkenneſs, confeſſion of ine in the diſcharge of relative duties, reſtitution, cleaving eir own Miniſters, and attending ordinances diſpenſed by , (which is a leading mark), ſetting about family and ſociayer, deſirable evidences of fervent love to one another, men, and even to thoſe who ſpeak evil of them. What ible evidences they give of love to ſome men, particularly ieceders, will be afterwards conſidered, in the mean time, oove fruits, either ſeparately, or taken together, will not ſufficient proof of a ſaving work of grace upon the ſoul; is well know, that Herod reformed in many things; s confeſſed injuſtice, and made reſtitution; they may proy in Chriſt's name, and do many wonderful works, to n he will profeſs, I never knew you, Matth. vii. 22, 23. ſo if the work at Kelſyth, be exactly the ſame, with that at buſlang, it amounts to no more than this, that it was prod by commending Mr. Whitfield and his ſucceſs. He has people to talk a great deal about convictions and ſeeming ate, attended with a partial reformation from ſome groſſer , and the practices for a time of ſome moral and religious s which has nothing extraordinary in it at all, excepting, upon ſuch a ſlender foundation, multitudes of poor peohould perſuade themſelves, that they are ſure of heaven, o, if mercy prevent not, may come to die with a lie in their hand. And if there be any thing extraordinary in bers; if multitudes before entertained vain hopes of heand now have ſuch a preſumptuous perſuaſion of it, that will not ſo much as allow their converſion to be ſuſpected, ve it to every body to judge, whether their eſtate or condibe a whit bettered.

om all which it appears, that abſtracting from the righs judgment of God there is nothing extraordinary in this k, ſo far as is yet publicly owned by the promoters of it, pting the extraordinary bodily exerciſe that attends it, ely, (*according to* Mr. Robe's own word), ſaintings, by-

"sterick fits, convulsions, bodily agonies, and strugglings." These he labours by all means, to reconcile with a work of God's Spirit, and in order thereto, he tells us, *Preface*, p. 7. That "as there were the very same appearances, i. e. the very "same bodily agitations, accompanying such an effusion of the "Holy Spirit, in some of our American colonies, so the same "objections were made against them, which have been made "against this appearance of God amongst us." And for a satisfying answer to these objections, he refers them to a sermon of Mr. Edwards, minister of Northampton, of New England, on the distinguishing marks of the work of the Spirit of God.

This Pamphlet of Mr. Edward's is very highly extolled by the promoters of this work; Mr. Whitfield says, he sent the first copy of it to Scotland, and in the Postscript of his letter to Mr. M'Culloch, *Weekly History*, *No.* 25, he says, "There is "a sermon lately published by Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, "of New England, and printed in London, which I desire you "and your friends would have, and recommend most earnestly; "'tis the best thing of the kind I ever saw; you would think "the author had been at Cambuslang." In obedience to the above order, Mr. Willison, in his preface to that sermon, recommends it most earnestly, for he calls it, "a most excellent, "solid, judicious, and scriptural performance,—most useful to "the church, for discerning a true and real work of the Spirit "of God." And Messrs. Willison, Robe, and Whitfield all concur, in asserting, that Mr. Edwards has answered all the common objections that has been made against this work, either at home or abroad; yea, Mr. Whitfield in his usual strong and unguarded way, affirms, that "he has answered all the objections, that any can make against it. But there are hundreds, I hope in Scotland, to whom it is evident, that the objections are so far from being removed, that the very answers to them are further objections to the whole work.

The above, and like warm recommendations, have no doubt influenced some to take for granted, that is said by Mr. Edwards in his sermon, as a sufficient vindication of the work; and there are other persons, who are still persuaded, that the work is delusive, to whom the fallacy of Mr. Edward's reasoning, is not so obvious at first view.

It would require a treatise by itself to follow the chain of error, both in philosophy and divinity, that runs through the whole of this performance; only, because it is cried up, as the standard piece of this work, I shall endeavour to make it appear, that whatever was the intention of the author, yet the *manifest design* of his work, is to overthrow the very foundation *of faith*, and all practical godliness, and to establish mere

enthuſiaſm, and ſtrong deluſion, in the room of the true religion, revealed and required in the word.

1ſt, The whole ſcheme of enthuſiaſm or deluſion is built upon this falſe poſition, That we cannot think upon any thing inviſible or ſpiritual without ſome degree of imagination, or that images of ſpiritual things muſt be repreſented to our fancy, elſe we can have no thought about them. Accordingly Mr. Edwards tells us, page 26. "Such is our nature, that we cannot think "of things inviſible, without a degree of imagination. I dare "appeal, (ſays he,) to any man of the greateſt powers of mind, "whether or no he is able to fix his thoughts on God, or Chriſt, "or the things of another world, without imaginary ideas at- "tending his meditations. And the more engaged the mind "is, the more lively and ſtrong will the imaginary idea ordi- "narily be." Than which nothing can be more falſe and abſurd; for it is certain, that no object can enter the imagination, but which we have ſeen ourſelves before, or has been repreſented to us by others, as viſible or ſenſible; ſo that our ſenſes only, can furniſh the imagination with objects. Now to ſay, that we can have no thought or perception of any thing in the underſtanding, unleſs we have a ſenſible repreſentation of it in the imagination, is the ſame as to ſay, that we can have no conception of any thing but under a corporeal form, and ſo, according to Mr. Edwards, we can have no thought of God, without ſome viſionary form or ſhape, repreſented to our imagination, which is moſt groſs and abominable, and was the firſt riſe of idolatry in the world, Rom. i. 21, 23. They became vain in their imaginations, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beaſts, and creeping things; for it is plain, that they conceived vain images of him in their fancy, before they could ſet up idolatrous repreſentations of him in their temples.

It is true, the Spirit of God, in condeſcenſion to our weakneſs, repreſents ſome of the communicable perfections of God, under the reſemblance of ſome of the members of the human body; ſuch as, the eye, the ear, the hand and the feet, not that we ſhould form the leaſt imagination of any of theſe bodily parts to be in God, but to be laid to a pure conception of what is intended by theſe metaphors. Thus when we hear of an eye aſcribed to God, we ought to think of his knowledge; when we read of his arms and hands, to think of his power, and when bowels are aſcribed to him, to think of his compaſſion. So Chriſt is compared to the ſun, to a vine, to a rock; not that we ſhould form any repreſentation of Chriſt upon our *imagination by theſe things*, but only to think upon his perſon

al and mediatorial excellencies, ſignified by theſe ſimilitudes. Yea, it is ſo far from being true, that we cannot fix our thoughts on God or Chriſt without imaginary ideas, that if there be the leaſt ſenſible or viſionary repreſentation of God or of Chriſt formed in our imagination, we do that very moment think upon a falſe God and a falſe Chriſt. Our ſenſes and imagination cannot aſſiſt us at all in thinking upon the divine nature and perfections. What ſenſible repreſentation can be formed on the imagination of the eternity, omnipotence, and omniſcience and omnipreſence of God? We are infinitely removed from any conception of the true God, when the leaſt imaginary idea of him cleaves to our meditations. Hence it follows, that the very reverſe of what Mr. Edwards ſays, is true, namely, "The more engaged the mind is upon any ſpiritual object, the more lively and ſtrong will imaginary ideas be." I ſay the very reverſe of this is true: yea, there will be no imaginary ideas cleaving to the thought at all; for inſtance, in the act of believing or receiving Chriſt, as revealed and exhibited in the goſpel promiſe, I ſuppoſe the mind is as deeply engaged, as in any other act whatſoever, but there is not the leaſt imaginary idea cleaving to that act, for if there were the leaſt ſenſible or viſionary repreſentation of Chriſt upon the imagination, it would not be a believing or crediting the record of God, but a ſeeing of a ſenſible object. And indeed this viſionary repreſentation of inviſible objects in the imagination, has been at the bottom of all the deluſions that have ever hitherto taken place in the world, and is the fertile ſource of all ſatanical impoſture. Accordingly we find,

2d, That Mr. Edwards acknowledges, that this work is begun by repreſentations of dreadful objects, upon the imagination, which after violent bodily agitations, are ſucceeded by imaginary or viſionary repreſentations, ſeemingly more agreeable. Page 54. "Theſe who are in ſuch extremity, (viz. of bodily "agony and pain) very often have a lively idea of the horrible "pit of eternal miſery, and at the ſame time, it appears to them, "that a great God who has them in his hands, is exceedingly "angry with them, his wrath appears amazingly terrible to "them, God appearing to them ſo much provoked, and his "wrath ſo much incenſed, they are apprehenſive of great dan-"ger, that he will now forthwith cut them off, and ſend them "down to the dreadful pit they have in view.—Very many "have an extraordinary ſenſe of their fully deſerving that "wrath and deſtruction, which is in their eyes." The plain obvious meaning of all this is, they have a lively ſenſible *repreſentation*, carried in upon their imaginations, of material *flames*, which they apprehend to be the flames of hell fire, and *that the viſionary* repreſentation may be as horrible, and amaz-

ingly terrible as the cauſe of it can produce, their bodies at the ſame time are ſeized with violent agonies and convulſions, (which is the extremity Mr. Edwards ſpeaks of) in which caſe, they cannot but apprehend from a natural conſciouſneſs of guilt, which Satan works up to horror and deſpair, that they are juſt ready to drop into that dreadful pit of deſtruction, which Mr. Edwards ſays is then before their eyes; or which is the ſame thing, of which they have a viſionary repreſentation.

If I had ventured to give ſuch an account as this, of the ſpring and riſe of what they call their convictions, they would be ready to call it in queſtion; but I ſuppoſe none will diſcredit the account when it comes from Mr. Edwards, whom they ſet up as a great patron, and defender of the work; and that I have given the true meaning of his words, will further appear from what he ſays, page 55. "There have been ſome inſtances very "much like theſe demoniacs that we read of, Mark vii. 16. "ch. ix. 26. of whom we read, that when Satan had cried with "loud voice, and rent them ſore, he came out of them; and "probably, (ſays he) the inſtances were deſigned for a type of "ſuch things as theſe." The ſcripture account of the demoniacs, ſpoken of Mark ix. compared with the parallel places amounts to this—Lo a ſpirit taketh him, and he ſuddenly crieth out, and it teareth him, that he foameth and gnaſheth with his teeth, and bruiſing him, he pineth away, and it hardly departeth from him. Now, it is undeniable, that theſe agitations and convulſions ſpoken of in the text, were the immediate effects of a diabolical poſſeſſion, and ſince Mr. Edwards connects ſuch bodily agonies as theſe, with the marks of the true Spirit, it is no wonder that he falls into that terrible blunder of making the work of Satan *typical* of the work of the Spirit of God; which if I had freedom to uſe his own words, page 63, "wants but one thing of the unpardonable ſin, viz. his ſaying it againſt inward conviction."

It is probable that the above remark of Mr. Edwards, has led Mr. Webſter into a thought upon the ſubject, equally extravagant, *Letter, page* 92. "Allowing," ſays he, "that Satan, who no doubt is preſent at ſuch meetings of the ſons of God, was permitted to haraſs ſeveral perſons in this extraordinary manner, it would no more prove the work, in general, deluſive or diabolical, than the charge could be brought againſt our Saviour, and ſuch as through his word believed on God, Satan being then permitted to tear multitudes, and caſt them down to the ground." As Satan had been permitted to tear and caſt on the ground, multitudes of thoſe, who, through the word of Chriſt, believed on God, which is the only meaning *his words can bear* to make ſenſe of them. But neither Mr

Webſter nor any for him, will be capable to make good, that our Saviour's doctrine was attended with ſuch direful and gloomy ſcenes, for there is not the leaſt mention of one, let be multitudes, caſt down to the ground and torn, at any of Chriſt's ſermons. The demoniacs were brought to him for a cure, and it is plain Satan was diſpoſſeſſed before any of them believed, and is as plain that they were torn and caſt down afterwards by him.

Now when perſons are in the above deplorable condition, having their imagination filled with moſt horrible repreſentations, and their bodies at the ſame time, under moſt violent agonies, attended with a hedious expectation of a ſpeedy accompliſhment of all their fearful imaginations, it is no wonder that they do moſt ardently deſire preſent deliverance at any rate; accordingly Satan finding them thus prepared, to wiſh for eaſe at any rate, he ſuits the deliverance unto the nature of the work, by making a repreſentation upon their imagination, of what appears moſt agreeable to their ſenſes, attended with a ſtrong perſuaſion of the reality of what they ſee and hear, and conſequently, that they are really converted, (the ſtrength of the deluſion lying there), ſo they come to be filled with extatic joys and raptures. This is exactly agreeable to Mr. Edwards' own account of their outgate. Page 55. "And "then, (viz. after the condition above deſcribed) light has ap- "peared, and a glorious Redeemer, with his wonderful all- "ſufficient grace, has been repreſented to them, often in ſome "ſweet revelation of ſcripture, ſometimes the light comes in "ſuddenly, ſometimes more gradually, filling their ſouls with "joy and love," &c. and page 27. "They have been in a "kind of extacy, wherein they have been carried beyond them- "ſelves, and have had their minds tranſported into a train of "ſtrong and pleaſing imaginations, and kind of viſions, as tho' "they were wrapt up even unto heaven, and there ſaw glo- "rious ſights." And after this they cannot endure to have their converſion ſo much as queſtioned; yea, it is blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, according to them, to expreſs the leaſt ſuſpicion of it. This brings to remembrance the words of the Lord, Mat. xxi. 43, 44, 45, "When the unclean ſpirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, ſeeking reſt and finding none—Then he ſaith, I will return unto my houſe from whence I came out, and when he is come, he findeth it empty, ſwept and garniſhed. Then goeth he, and taketh with himſelf ſeven other ſpirits more wicked than himſelf, and they enter in and dwell there, and the laſt ſtate of that man is worſe than the firſt." Not to inſiſt upon illuſtrating every word in this parable, the ſcope thereof, as applicable to the preſent

purpoſe, ſeems to be this, viz. When Satan hath ſo filled the imagination with dreadful repreſentations, that the perſon wants eaſe at any terms, then having gained his end, he goes out of the man in that terrible ſhape, or frees his imagination of thoſe frightful ideas that haunted it before, and then by the means of more pleaſing and delightful ſenſations, he returns into the perſon thus prepared for his more dangerous reception, with the devil of pride, preſumption, confident perſuaſion, and the like, attended always with an averſion to any teſtimony for the viſible kingdom of Chriſt, and ſo the laſt ſtate of that man is worſe than the firſt. "All other reformations," ſays Mr. Halyburton, in his memoirs, "proves but a ſweeping and garniſhing while the ſoul is empty of Chriſt: it may be ſwept from the filth of flagitious ſins, and garniſhed with the paint of religion, or ſome habits of moral virtue, but none of theſe will keep out the devil."

3d, Mr. Edwards being abundantly ſenſible, that there is no example of ſuch frightful or delightful ſenſations and imaginations above deſcribed, to be found in the experience of the ſaints of God recorded in ſcripture; therefore he falls upon the ſhort way of ſetting aſide ſcripture experience altogether, from being any ſtandard, whereby to judge of the conformity of our experiences to the work of the Spirit of God upon others, as deſcribed in the word; for he ſays, page 20. "No deviations "from what has hitherto been uſual, let it be never ſo great, "is an argument that a work is not a work of the Spirit of "God." Page 23. he argues, That though there be no inſtances in ſcripture of ſuch extraordinary effects upon the bodies of men, yet there is no force in the objection, if there be not ſcripture rule excluding ſuch things. We ought indeed to exclude from our practice and imitation, every thing that wants the authority of ſcripture rule or example; but then we muſt acknowledge, the binding force of ſcriptural example, even when there is no ſcripture rule expreſsly enjoining the thing in as many words. For it has always been ſtrenuouſly maintained by Proteſtants againſt the Papiſts, that neceſſary and evident ſcripture conſequences, and imitable ſcripture example, are of equal authority with ſcripture precepts. And therefore ſince convulſions, hyſteric fits, and bodily agonies, followed with viſionary repreſentations of ſeemingly delightful objects, are not recorded, as attending the ſpiritual experiences of the ſaints, they are contrary to ſcripture example, which is the ſame thing in this caſe, as to be excluded by a ſcripture rule. However there is no want of plain ſcripture rule, *diſcharging* all imaginary ideas of God, or, which is the *ſame thing*, excluding all ſenſible repreſentations of God,

of Chriſt from our imaginations, as abſolutely unlawful, being directly forbidden, both in the firſt and ſecond commandments.

But, further, in the room of ſcripture-pattern in the experiences of the ſaints, Mr. Edwards ſets up a mechanical extra-ſcriptural example, whereby he affirms, perſons are greatly affected by ſeeing others ſo; for page 29, he ſays, that "The ſame thing may be ſignified more fully and effectually by actions than by words." I own in things mechanical it is ſo, a tradeſman may ſhew his apprentice, how ſuch a piece of work is to be done, by doing the like himſelf, which will be a more effectual ſignification of his mind, than mere verbal directions could be; but in things ſpiritual it is abſolutely abſurd, for faith cometh by hearing the word of God and not by the example of any man whatſoever. I am not here ſpeaking againſt the uſefulneſs of examples, in practical godlineſs, but of that ſecret impulſe, communicated by the example of others, whereby a perſon is affected in like manner even though there be not a word ſpoken; for it is of this and not the former, that Mr. Edwards ſpeaks. Accordingly, page 29th, he adds, "Though the impreſſion that is made upon them ſhould be only by ſeeing tokens in the behaviour of others without hearing them ſay one word:" which is exactly the language of Quakers, a branch of that helliſh ſcheme, calculated for enervating and overthowing the divine authority of the word, as it is the only foundation of faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And that Mr. Edwards wants to ſet aſide the word as the only rule, at leaſt in judging and trying this work, will plainly appear from what he ſays, page 44. "Whatſoever Spirit removes our darkneſs, and brings us to the light, does us a kindneſs; if I am brought to the ſign of truth, and am ſenſible of the things, as they be, my duty is immediately to thank God for it, without ſtanding firſt to enquire by what means I have ſuch a bleſſing," without enquiring whether I have it by the means of the word, or by a ſatanical impoſture, which is quite contrary to the expreſs letter of the text; which Mr. Edwards pretends to inſiſt upon, Try the ſpirits whether they are of God.

4th, Mr. Edwards being aware that this work, which he ſo much patronizes, cannot ſtand the trial of the diſtinguiſhing marks of a ſaving work of grace upon the ſoul; he is therefore, for ſtating no ſpecial difference between common and ſaving grace, or drawing any dividing line between ſaints and hypocrites, page 71. "There is a judging of ſome ſort or other, "*that the* ſcriptures very ſtrictly prohibits:—it is plain that, "*that ſort* of judging is forbidden, that God claims as his prerogative, whatever it be. And if we examine we will find,

"that the judging of hearts, that is ſpoken of as God's prero-
"gative, is not only the judging of the aims and diſpoſitions
"of men's hearts in particular actions, but chiefly the judging
"of the ſtate of the hearts of the profeſſors of religion, with
"regard to that profeſſion—To diſtinguiſh hypocrites that
"have a form of godlineſs from true ſaints is the proper, yea,
"the main buſineſs of the day of judgment; they therefore
"do greatly err, who take it upon them poſitively to deter-
"mine who are ſincere and who not, and to draw the divid-
"ing line between true ſaints and hypocrites." No reaſona-
ble man ever pretended to judge men's hearts, otherwiſe than by their outward actions; this is not the queſtion in debate; but the queſtion is, whether miniſters ought not doctrinally to declare, that there is a ſpecific difference between common and ſaving grace, and between both theſe and the deluſions of Satan, and conſequently whether they ought not to point out theſe diſtinguiſhing marks from the word, and that chriſtians examine themſelves thereby, that they may know whether they have grace in reality, or the counterfeit of it only: this is what we affirm to be the indiſpenſable duty both of miniſters, and people, according to 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourſelves whether you be in the faith; which certainly points out the duty of miniſters, to be very particular in offering diſtinguiſhing marks from the word, and the duty of people to examine themſelves thereby.

But Mr. Edwards is againſt ſuch a narrow and ſtrict ſearch, as it would tend to diſcover the whole myſtery of iniquity, that Satan is carrying on by his devices; and therefore we find that the poſitive marks which he gives of the true Spirit, ſumed up page 50. are no way diſtinguiſhing; they are ſuch as will agree not only with common influences of the Spirit; but even with the deluſions of Satan. For tho' he is confident, that he has given an enumeration of diſtinguiſhing marks, that he ſays, they are ſufficient to determine this work, to be the work of God, unleſs the apoſtle John was out of his rules, and page 56. "If the apoſtle John knew how to give ſigns of a work "of the Spirit of God, this is ſuch a work;" yet it will be obvious to any intelligent chriſtian, that a perſon may have all the marks he condeſcends upon, as he treats them, and yet be under a groſs deluſion; for he is exceeding lame in his account; he makes not the leaſt mention of faith apprehending Chriſt in the word of promiſe, nor of the neceſſity of it, not a word of the inward conflict that is in the believer with a body of ſin and death; nor a deſire to have the heart ſearched by the candle of the word, in the hand of the Spirit; nor of *any concern for the* declarative glory of God, and contend-

ing for the preſent truth, in oppoſition to the indifferency and neutrality of the world; although theſe and many more diſtinguiſhing marks, are to be found in the writings of the apoſtle John from whence Mr. Edwards pretends to have made a full enumeration of the marks of the true Spirit.

And it is ſaid for Mr. Edwards, that he is giving the marks of a divine influence of the Spirit of God, in oppoſition to a diabolical influence, or deluſion, becauſe he ſays, page 49 "There are common influences of the Spirit which are often miſtaken for ſaving grace, but theſe are out of queſtion, becauſe though they are not ſaving; yet they are the work of the true Spirit." And page 52. "Whether perſons' convictions, and the alterations in their diſpoſitions and affections be in a degree and manner that is ſaving, is beſide the preſent queſtion." But let it be conſidered, that as he lays down no marks of diſtinction, between a common operation of the Spirit, and a deluſion of Satan; ſo granting this work were the effect of a common operation of the Spirit, yet if it goes no farther, perſons will be as effectually ruined in the iſſue, as they could be by a ſatanical impoſture.

Again, it is obvious from the whole tenor of his diſcourſe that it is ſo laid, as to make people believe he is giving the marks of a ſaving operation of the Spirit on the ſouls of men and that he is accounting for ſome uncommon appearances that preſently attends ſuch a gracious work; if it were not ſo why is it ſo mightily cried up, as an extraordinary work of the Spirit of God? why ſo much noiſe about the numbers of converts who are deſcribed and pointed out as gracious perſons, in all the papers publiſhed in defence of this work? and why are they declared guilty of the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, who ſpeak a word againſt it, as Mr. Edwards does? page 63. And I find all the writers on that ſide, eſpecially the clergy, copy after his example, which indeed is an effectual way to impoſe upon the ignorant; but they that know their God, will not be ſo eaſily beat out of their religion and reaſon by big words.

Further, Mr. Williſon, who may be ſuppoſed to have peruſed the ſermon of Mr. Edwards, ſays of it in his preface thereto, that, "it will prove moſt uſeful to the church, for diſcerning a true and real work of the Spirit of God, and for guarding againſt deluſions and miſtakes." By a true and real work of the Spirit of God, he cannot but mean a ſaving work, elſe he impoſes upon the world, by ſuch a preface, wherein he ſays, "The Lord is come ſuddenly into his temple, by a glorious *miniſtration* of his Spirit with the word, firſt in America, then *in Britain* itſelf, particularly in ſeveral places of the weſt of *Scotland*, whereby many are awakened and converted from ſin

to God." But after all, as I hinted before, none of the poſitive marks, eſpecially as Mr. Edwards explains them, (which I need not here tranſcribe, the book being ſo common) will ſerve to prove this work to be the effect of divine influence; they may be found every one of them, in a perſon that is under the deluſion of Satan. Many judicious divines, ſuch as, Guthrie, Shepherd, Burges, and others, do evince from the word, that hypocriſy and deluſion, may be attended with higher marks, than any that Mr. Edwards has condeſcended upon.

From what has been ſaid, it too evidently appears, that this grand performance of Mr. Edwards, ſo much applauded by the promoters of this work, is juſt calculated for ſupporting enthuſiaſm, and conſequently for razing the very foundation of faith, and all practical godlineſs; and therefore, I am ſorry that Mr. Williſon has ſo raſhly, to ſay no worſe, recommended it to the Scots reader, what is ſo manifeſtly everſive of all true religion, and directly contrary to all that he formerly preached and publiſhed to the world, till of late, and ſhall earneſtly wiſh he and others may in time ſee their miſtake, and honeſtly retract what they have done.

Although Mr. Robe ſays, it would be ſuperfluous and unneceſſary to anſwer apart after Mr. Edwards, yet he thinks fit to make the following remarks, ſome of which, by the by, are the ſame with what Mr. Edwards makes before him.

1ſt. Mr. Robe obſerves, *Pref. page* 28. "That there are ſome who do not cry out in the congregation, neither have any of the aforeſaid bodily ſeizures, who have been under a law work for ſome months, and are, ſo far as we can know the ſtate of another, ſavingly converted. And there are others who have been under the ſevereſt bodily diſtreſs, in whom the work of conviction and converſion, as to the main ſtrokes of them, anſwer to the former, as face to face in a glaſs." Hence he infers, that no thinking perſon will conclude, that all is deluſion with the latter, merely becauſe their bodies were ſtrangely diſordered, ſeeing they have the ſame inconteſtible evidences of converſion with the former.

To this I anſwer, 1ſt, Although Mr. Webſter, artfully inſinuates, *Letter, page* 12. That it has been charged upon the gentlemen of the Seceſſion, as he calls them; and drawn as an inference from their writings, "That not one ſoul can be converted within the pale of the eſtabliſhed church of Scotland;" yet none of theſe miniſters ever ſaid ſo, and I believe never thought ſo; yea, as I hinted before, they would rejoice to ſee thouſands for one really converted, and that the gathering of the people were indeed unto the Shiloh. I may add further, *that their charity is* not ſo narrow, but that they think, that

many are in the eſtabliſhed church, and carried off with the deluſion of the day, who were formerly, and conſequently ſtill are gracious perſons, whoſe eyes the Lord may yet open in his time. But then, 2d, The inconteſtible evidences of converſion, as enumerated either by the Narrative, or by Mr. Edwards, or by Mr. Webſter, falling ſhort of the diſtinguiſhing marks of a ſaving work of the Spirit of God; perſons that have no other evidences, whether ſuch as have been under the ſevereſt bodily diſtreſs, or ſuch as have none of theſe bodily ſeizures, they may exactly correſpond to one another, as face anſwereth face in a glaſs, and yet both be under a groſs deluſion: for my part, I ſhould think myſelf unfaithful to my truſt, as a miniſter, if I made people depend ſolely upon ſuch evidences of converſion, as I find inſiſted upon by the promoters of this work. Let the following ſcriptures be conſidered, Ezra ix. 6, &c. Pſalm cvi. 6, 7, &c. Ezek. ix. 4. Rom. vii. 21, 23, 24.

The 2d remark that Mr. Robe makes, is, "That faintings, hyſteric fits, convulſions, bodily agonies, and ſtrugglings, may be the effects of ſudden fears, a great ſorrow upon worldly ground, and therefore he ſees no reaſon why legal terrors and fears, and a ſtrong apprehenſion of the wrath of God in perſons, ſhould not have the like effects upon their bodies."

As Mr. Robe has this remark entirely from Mr. Edwards, ſo I have anſwered it above. It is obvious to any that underſtand philoſophy or common ſenſe, that theſe bodily agitations and agonies can be nothing elſe but the effects of a ſtrong impulſe upon the imagination, and cannot poſſibly be the immediate effects of the actings of the ſuperior faculties of the ſoul, ſuch as the underſtanding and will; theſe can produce no ſuch effects as are here mentioned; and therefore, ſince it is not pretended in the preſent caſe, that theſe faintings, convulſions, &c. are the effects of ſudden fear, or grief on wordly grounds, it is impoſſible but that they muſt flow from a worſe cauſe. The ſeat of the operations of the Holy Spirit is the ſuperior powers of the ſoul, Satan has eaſy acceſs to the imagination: all horrible or pleaſing viſionary repreſentations that are formed there are from him only, 2 Theſ. ii. 9, 10, 11.

Mr. Robe obſerves, 3d, That there is much reaſon to conclude, "that the work of God in converting many in ſeveral pariſhes in the Shire of Air, and other places in the weſt, from the year 1625 to 1630, was attended with much the ſame appearances with this now." And ſo he tranſcribes at large the account which the author of the Fulfilling of the Scripture gives of what was then nick-named the Stewarton Sickneſs. Mr. Webſter imagines this ſtory makes ſo much for their purpoſe, that he likewiſe gives it room in his Letter, page 37, ſo that

I need not tranſcribe it a third time, ſince it is now ſo current. From the ſaid quotation, Mr. Robe infers, "The ſimilitude and likeneſs of this work amongſt us, unto that referred to, ſeems evident; and can theſe bodily effects mentioned be juſt grounds of objection againſt this work now, and not alſo againſt the other?" But I muſt be allowed to ſhew, that there is the wideſt difference between the preſent work, and the work of God then, in every reſpect.

1ſt, It muſt be obſerved, that the author of the Fulfilling of the Scripture is there giving inſtances of the remarkable outlettings of the Spirit, attending the miniſtry of theſe who were honoured to be moſt inſtrumental in carrying on reformation work. The firſt inſtance he gives, is the ſucceſs that attended the miniſtry of our firſt reformers, ſuch as Luther, Melancton, Zuinglius and others abroad; and Mr. George Wiſhart at home; and then he mentions the extraordinary outletting of the Spirit in the weſt of Scotland, about the year 1625, quoted by Meſſrs. Robe and Webſter, accompanying the miniſtry of thoſe, who were bearing any teſtimony at that time, under hot perſecution from the prelatic party, particularly at Irvine, under the miniſtry of the famous Mr. Dickſon; and after other inſtances of the like nature, he ſpeaks of "the remarkable time wherein the Lord did let forth of his Spirit on his people in the year 1638, when the nation did ſo ſolemnly enter into covenant with God, then did the nation own the Lord, and was viſibly owned by him, much zeal and an enlarged heart did appear for the public cauſe." So that the author is ſpeaking of the outlettings of the Spirit that have accompanied public as well as perſonal reformation. But can any of the promoters of this work alledge for themſelves, that they are making the ſame eſſay towards public reformation, as it has been owned and profeſſed in theſe lands; nay, as ſhall afterwards be made appear, they are doing what they can to obliterate the memory of Scotland's covenanted reformation, and to raze all concern about it out of the minds of the people.

Again, the Lord's work at Irvine, at the time mentioned, was not attended with ſuch cloudy appearances, as cleave unto this preſent work among us, all that is ſaid of the people at that time is, "Many were ſo ſhocked and taken by the heart that thro' terrors, the Spirit in ſuch a meaſure convincing them of ſin in hearing of the word, they have been made to fall over, and thus carried out of the church, who afterwards proved moſt ſolid and lively Chriſtians."

This paſſage Mr. Webſter thinks ſo much to the point in hand, *that he cannot* omit tranſcribing it, Letter, page 36.

But it is obſervable, that the occaſion of their fallin was the overpowering influence of the Spirit of God up ſouls in the hearing of the word, which is not refuſed circumſtances; but in the preſent caſe, multitudes f without hearing a word ſpoken, as Mr. Edwards allow the caſe abroad, unto which it is granted that the home is ſimilar, and known in this inſtance to be ſo ſeverals having owned, that it was not by means of a ſpoken or brought to their remembrance that they un bodily ſeizures; but beſides there is no mention of t ter outcryings, convulſions, bodily agonies and ſtru which are the ordinary concomitants of the preſent w

Since then the inſtruments whom the Lord employe weſt of Scotland at the time ſpoken of, where men w the objects of hot prelatic perſecution, becauſe they wit gainſt them, as is fairly enough inſinuated by the auth ſince it was by the means of goſpel ordinances orderly ed, that the Spirit of the Lord was poured down upon t of the people, in time of hearing, in ſuch a plentiful m that their frail bodies were inactive for a time, with leaſt agony, convulſion or ſtruggling; and ſince the work has all the contrary appearances attending it, it follows there is no ſimilitude between this and the form therefore, ſince Meſſrs. Robe and Webſter have been ſearc author of the Fulfilling of Scripture, in queſt of an exa the work which they ſo much cry up, I ſhall put them of a paſſage from the ſame author, much nearer the hand in all reſpects; *Great Appearances of God for hi under the New Teſtament*, page 201. "Wherever in an churches the Lord hath had ſome ſpecial work on foot, intereſt of the goſpel gaining ground, Satan then h lowed the ſame remarkably with ſome cloſe and ſubtile in bringing forth ſomething of his work in reſemblance to beget prejudice againſt the way of truth. It was tionably one of the moſt ſearching trials the German had, by that ſtrange appearance of the Anababtiſts ther this being ſo notour and public in the hiſtories of t times; beſides other remarkable inſtances of the like forbear to mention it further. One memorable paſſa is known to many; may be for ſome advantage, and ing to the truth, the inſerting of it here: When th was flouriſhing in the Church of Ireland, by the Mi ſome eminent ſervants of Chriſt, who were labouri ſome years before the rebellion, and a moſt extraordin of the power of the Spirit following the ordinances, *thers of* Satan's devices, to caſt a let in the way, ha

ortive this great deſtroyer, was at laſt let looſe in a ſtrange anner, to eſſay a counterfeit of the work of the Lord there. his firſt began about Lochlearn upon ſeveral ignorant perſons, ho in the midſt of the public worſhip, fell a breathing and anting as thoſe who had run long, with ſtrange pangs like onvulſions; yea, thus they were affected, whatever purpoſe as preached, even by ſuch miniſters, who were known ene- ies to the truth, the number of which ſtill increaſed through everal pariſhes for a time. At firſt both miniſters and chriſ- ians were put to a ſtand: but afterward upon farther diſco- ery of the tendency of their way, and finding no ſolid convinc- ng work, which had therewith any ſenſe of their ſin, or anting after a Saviour, did quickly perceive this to be one f the depths of Satan, and his deſign to ſlander and diſgrace he work of the Lord,—yea, it was evident, how ſuch did con- inue afterwards rude, profane and ignorant. Through this ngine did the devil thus drive to beget prejudices amongſt hoſe that did look on at a diſtance, againſt the power and life f religion."

The 4th remark Mr. Robe makes is, "That in New En- land, where hundreds were affected in their bodies, the ſame ay ſeverals with us are; the moſt part of theſe who are tho't o be converted, have continued now for ſome years to profeſs erious godlineſs, and to practice it, without returning to their ormer follies: and ſhall we not hope the ſame of theſe con- erted among us, ſeeing alſo they have continued for ſeveral nonths, in a deſirable way."

As to the work in New England, the reader may judge of : from an account given thereof, in a proteſtation preſented o the Synod of Philadelphia, June 1ſt, 1741, printed at Phila- elphia the ſaid year, and ſubſcribed by twelve miniſters and ight elders; where ſpeaking of Mr. Gilbert Tennent, and thers of Mr. Whitfield's adherents, they teſtify, page 11, gainſt their preaching the terrors of the law in ſuch a manner nd dialect, as has no precedent in the word of God, but ra- her appears to be borrowed from a worſe dialect: and ſo in- uſtriouſly working on the paſſions and affections of weak inds, as to cauſe them to cry out in a hideous manner, and all down in convulſion like fits, to the marring of the profit- ng both of themſelves and others, who are ſo taken up with eeing and hearing theſe odd ſymptoms, that they cannot at- end to hear what the preacher ſays; and then after all, boaſt- ng of theſe things as the work of God, which we are perſuad- d do proceed from an inferior or worſe cauſe." This con- urring teſtimony of ſo many miniſters and elders of the *reſbyterian perſuaſion*, who had full acceſs to know the ſtate

of matters as to religion in our American colonies, will certainly find credit with all ſober thinking perſons: And if we judge of the continuance of a profeſſion in New England, by the continuance of it (ſuch as it was) in ſeveral places of the weſt of Scotland, we cannot but conclude that there is little of a profeſſion, to be found among that people by this time; for it is moſt remarkable, that within the ſpace of leſs than eight months, this work is as ſuddenly decaying in the place where it began, as it roſe at firſt, and in other places, it has begun and decayed in much ſhorter time, even though all poſſible means have been uſed to preſerve it in vigour; and it is obvious to common obſervation, that it has happened, at leaſt to theſe who were immoral and had not a profeſſion before, according to the true Proverb, 2 Pet. ii. 22. The dog is turned to his vomit again, and the ſow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire.

Under this head Mr. Robe pretends, "To give inſtances from the holy ſcripture of things exactly ſimilar to theſe bodily diſtreſſes, which he ſays are to be found in our caſe." But becauſe Mr. Webſter mentions theſe inſtances more diſtinctly, I ſhall conſider them as they ſtand in his letter page 35, 36. For a ſcripture inſtance of crying out under the miniſtry of the word, or in time of public worſhip, he cites, Acts ii. 37. and tells us that three thouſand wounded ſouls cried out at once. Whereas the text runs thus, When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and ſaid unto Peter and to the reſt of the Apoſtles, Men and Brethern what ſhall we do? Here there is not the leaſt mention of crying or ſcreaming, but only that they ſaid or ſpoke with that calmneſs and compoſure of mind, which attends the operations of the true Spirit. Nor is it ſaid that they ſpake all at once, as Mr. Webſter affirms, which would make a confuſed and unintelligible ſound; nor that they ſpoke in time of Peter's ſermon, but after he had finiſhed and applied his diſcourſe, verſe 36, the ſucceſs thereof appeared in a convincing work of the Spirit of God, which was intimated to him and the reſt of the apoſtles, by ſeverals of the multitude, verſe 37, ſome ſpeaking (in the interval) to one of the apoſtles, and ſome to another: whereupon Peter begins another diſcourſe ſuitable to their caſe, verſe 38, a great part whereof is not recorded, for it is ſaid, verſe 40, that with many other words, he did teſtify and exhort. The iſſue of all, verſe 41, That the ſame day were added unto them about three thouſand ſouls: ſo that this paſſage makes nothing for the bitter outcryings that have been heard among *the people* at Cambuſlang, Kelſyth, and other places, in time of *public* worſhip, to the marring of both their own and the edifi-

cation of others. And the other text that he quotes from Mr. Edwards will make as little for his purpoſe, Pſalm xxxii. 2. When I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. If Mr. Webſter had proved that this roaring was in time of public worſhip, it had been to the point; but I ſuppoſe that though the roaring be taken in a literal ſenſe, it will be granted that it was in ſecret, and none was diſturbed therewith. However, if this roaring be underſtood literally of a great noiſe, why may not other expreſſions of the like nature be taken in a literal ſenſe likewiſe? ſuch as, my moiſture is turned into the drought of ſummer; my loins are filled with a loathſome diſeaſe, my heart is ſmitten and withered like the graſs; and my bones are burnt as an hearth. Which paſſages and the like, if literally underſtood, would be inconſiſtent with natural life, and therefore all ſound interpreters underſtand them in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as expreſſive of the degree of the ſoul's exerciſe.

Again, for ſcripture inſtances of trembling, fainting, falling down as dead, he cites the Jailor, Paul at his converſion, and the apoſtle John in the Iſle of Patmos. As for the Jailor, there was a concurrence of extraordinary Providences that occaſioned his trembling, which cannot be plead in the preſent caſe; The foundations of the priſon were ſhaken by a great earthquake, and immediately all the doors were opened, and every ones bands were looſed, Acts xvi. 26. This, together with his being happily prevented from ſelf-murder, and diſappointed of his fears, with reſpect to the eſcape of the priſoners, made him come trembling and fall down before Paul and Silas, in the way of civil homage only, it being the cuſtom of Eaſtern nations, to pay their homage in ſuch an humble manner, as the continuators of *Pool* obſerve on this place; and it was after all this that the man's conſcience was thoroughly awakened, when he ſaid, verſe 30. Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved? As to the inſtance of Paul's falling to the ground, Acts ix. 4. upon the occaſion of a light from heaven ſhining round about him, it is plain that as he was to be employed in the office of an apoſtle, ſo he behoved to have an immediate commiſſion from the Lord Jeſus, which he received at that time, Acts xxvi. 16. But there can be no argument drawn from this as a precedent for falling down, when no ſuch extraordinary occaſion for it can be pretended unto.

And though it is ſaid, Rev. i. 17. That the apoſtle John fell down as dead, upon the glorious viſion, that he had of the Son of God, or that Daniel had no ſtrength remaining in him, upon the ſame occaſion; can there be any argument *drawn from* theſe extraordinary privileges conferred upo

ſome eminent ſaints of God, and the effects of them, to ſupport the bodily agonies of ignorant people, who are not ſo much as alledged to be converted while in that diſmal caſe? Upon the whole, Mr. Webſter and others muſt not imagine, that their bare mentioning of the above inſtances, will paſs for argument; for, let the matter be narrowly examined, and it will be found, that there is not the leaſt ſhadow of an example in ſcripture that runs parallel to the fainting, down fallings, convulſions and ſtrugglings, that take place at preſent, excepting the inſtances of the Demoniacs, Mark xi. 18. Luke ix. 39. which the reader may conſult.

Laſtly, Mr. Robe, *Pref. page* 10, ſeriouſly begs of thoſe who look upon this work as a deluſion, that they would direct him and other miniſters how they ſhall anſwer diſtreſſed perſons, who come to them crying bitterly, what ſhall we do to be ſaved? And accordingly he wants direction what to anſwer in the following caſes, which he propoſes by way of queſtion, as ſo many natural conſequences of reckoning this to be the work of the devil.

Queſ. 1ſt. Shall we tell them they are not Chriſtleſs and unconverted, when we evidently ſee many of them ſuch? Anſ. By no means, only beware of looking upon perſons to be Chriſtleſs and unconverted, merely becauſe they are Seceders, as Mr. Robe does, Narrat. page 27. where he ſays, that ten or twelve who deſerted his miniſtry, "were of no conſideration as to ſerious religion or even knowledge, except one, who ſometime ſince ſaw his error, and returned." Whereas it is well known, that the Seceders in that pariſh are in the judgment of charity, of as great conſideration as to ſerious godlineſs, as any that Mr. Robe can boaſt of in his congregation; and as for their knowledge, ſo far as I am informed, I would not be afraid to venture them upon a comparative trial with the new converts themſelves. Queſt. 2d. Shall we tell them that the fears of the wrath of God, is only all but deluſion? Ans. If their fears are the effect of a heated imagination and flow from a ſenſible repreſentation of horrible objects upon their fancy, do not fail to tell them, that this is nothing elſe but deluſion. Queſt. 3, ſhall we tell perſons lamenting their curſing, ſwearing, Sabbath breaking, and other immoralities that it is the devil who makes them ſee thoſe evils to be offenſive to God, and deſtructive to their ſouls? Ans. Though the devil cannot make them ſee theſe or any other evils, as they are offenſive to God, yet he may prompt them to reſt in a partial reformation, well knowing that Publicans and Harlots, will enter into the *kingdom* of heaven, or be more eaſily reclaimed than ſelf-

righteous persons.' Quest. 4th, "Shall we tell them, who under the greatest uneasiness, enquire at us what they shall do, to get an interest and faith in Christ, that Satan is deluding them, when they shew any concern this way? Ans. It is false from their frightful apprehensions, that they wait upon any terms, or if they are looking for a interest in Christ, upon their own doings in whole or in part, or upon their own act of believing, and are not brought quite off from a righteousness within them, to receive and rest upon Christ alone in the word, whatever concern they may seem to have, Satan is certainly deluding them. Quest. 5th, Shall we pray and recommend it to them to pray, to deliver them from such delusions? Ans. By all means, as you would desire to recover them from the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. Upon the whole, Mr. Robe says, would be worse than deviliish, to treat the Lord's fighting prophets at this rate: what is worse than deviliish, I know not. I find that the frightful terms relative to the devil and hell, are the very Shibboleth of the party; but if I know any thing worse than deviliish, I think ministers persuading poor ignorant deluded people, that they are privileged people, comes nearest it; whereas they ought to call them to search and try their ways, and turn again unto the Lord, to examine themselves whether they be in the faith, and to cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, Ezek. xvi. 2: and like faithful watchmen to hear the word at God's mouth, and to give the people warning from him. But it is matter of regret, that it seems to be verified with respect to the promoters of this work, what the Lord says, Jer. vi. 13, 14. From the prophet even to the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.

There are two objections which Mr. Robe endeavours to remove, which I believe will stand in full force after all.

The first is, "That it cannot be the work of the Holy Ghost, and any real or true one from, which is so open to public notice, and makes so much noise, for our Lord tells, Luke xvii. 20. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." For the removal of this objection, after an angry criticism on the Greek word, which is to no purpose for that it makes against himself; he alledges, as Mr. Edwards had done before before him, "That our Lord doth not in the least insinuate, that the coming of the kingdom of God, in the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, was to be secretly set up without noise and observation. Did not the conversion of Samaria quickly reach the ears of the church at Jerusalem? Were not the conversions from Paganism to Christianity with observation?" All this is

but a weak and trifling evaſion; for though the apoſtles who were at Jeruſalem, heard that Samaria had received the word of God, Acts viii. 14. and though the converſion of the Jews will be obſerved, when it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to bring about that glorious event; yet what ſays this to oſtentation and outward ſhow wherewith this work is attended; for the objection is, that both the promoters of the work, and they who are enſnared therein, make ſo much noiſe about their converſion, and the number of their converts, that it is inconſiſtent with that modeſty and humility which is the inſeparable concomitant of a work of God. The flattering, and great ſwelling words of vanity, wherewith Meſſ. Webſter, Whitfield, and others, ſet off this work, are truly grating to the ears of any humble and ſelf-denied Chriſtian. Who ever denied that the work is obſervable, for ſo is every remarkable thing in the world, whether it be good or bad? But it is their vain-glorious boaſting of it, and their high encomiums of themſelves in their journals hiſtories and pamphlets, wherewith the world is dunned, this we ſay is contrary to the character of the kingdom of God, which cometh not with obſervation; for the kingdom of God, is not in word; but in power. 1 Cor. iv. 20. Our life is hid with Chriſt in God. The more of God, and the leſs of man is ſeen in any work, it ſpeaks it ſo much the more to be of God. The ſaints of God cannot endure to draw the admiration of the world after them. Not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name be the glory. It is the character of the beaſt to have all the world wondering after him, Rev. xiii. 3. It is moſt obſervable, that the Lord was not in the ſtrong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the ſtill ſmall voice, 1 Kings xix. 11, 12. And therefore we may ſafely conclude, that noiſe, ſelf-commendation, and applauſe, are the true characteriſtics or marks of deceivers, impoſtors, and ſuch as are under palpable deluſion; and conſequently the objection holds firm againſt this noiſy work, the kingdom of God cometh not with obſervation.

The other objection, *Pref.* page 12, 13, is taken from the Camizars. "And it is pretended, (ſays Mr. Robe,) that their caſe is the ſame with ours, and ſeeing they were under a deluſion, this muſt be a deluſion alſo. In anſwer to this he alledges, that there is the greateſt diſparity and unlikeneſs between the caſe of the Camizars and thoſe affected among us." And he endeavours to ſhow the diſparity in ſeveral inſtances, none of which will hold, tho' he has Mr. Webſter's teſtimony, *Letter*, page 33, for ſhewing accurately the great diſparity.

1ſt, He ſays, "The Camizars had their bodily agitations *from* a ſupernatural power. The diſtreſſes upon the bodies of

le proceed in a natural way, from the great fear of God's
h." I have ſhewn above from Mr. Edwards, that their fear
rath ariſe from ſenſible repreſentations of horrible objects
their imaginations; theſe repreſentations are not natural,
hey would be more univerſal. They cannot proceed from
ſpirit of God, as I have proven before, for the Spirit deals
the ſuperior faculties of the ſoul, in a rational way, in
by the word, enlightening and informing the underſtand-
and renewing and ſwaying the will: and ſince theſe
tful repreſentations upon the imagination are not natural,
ince they cannot be impreſſed by the Spirit of God, it re-
s that they muſt be impulſes of Satan, and conſequently,
ears that iſſue from them, muſt of neceſſity proceed from
ical influence, eſpecially when there can be no inſtance
in ſcripture, that the operations of the Spirit of God, in
nvincing work, have any ſuch dreadful effects upon the
s of men, as take place in the preſent caſe.

, "The Camizars pretended inſpiration, and underſtood
ometimes what they uttered; none of our people ever pre-
ed in the leaſt to inſpiration, they give a rational account
em'elves." In anſwer to this Mr. Edwards acknowledges
the work in New England, to which this in Scotland is
ly ſimilar, is attended with inſpiration, and tho' he allows
extraordinary gifts will ceaſe in what he calls the adult
of the church, i. e. when public charity or boundleſs tole-
n will take place every where, yet he argues nothing a-
t new inſpirations after the canon of the ſcripture is com-
d. Beſides it is obvious to the obſervation of all, that the
le who undergo theſe bodily ſeizures, preſently turn elo-
t and can talk fluently upon ſome ſcripture, tho' groſsly
rant before of the very firſt principles of religion, and if
is not inſpiration, I know not what it is, and herein the
itude to the Camizars holds, for ſo ſoon as that dialolical
: ſeized them, preſently they talked in rapture.

, "The Camizars," ſays Mr. Robe, "continued many
under their bodily agitations, whenever their pretended
ration ſeized them, but our people are delivered from their
y diſtreſſes, which do not return unto them again, when
are delivered from their fears." It would ſeem then that
fears frequently recur; for it is moſt certain, that many
em undergo theſe bodily diſtreſſes over and over again; ſo
in this inſtance the ſimilitude holds likewiſe.

h, "Among the Camizars, their pretended inſpired teach-
nly were affected: among us, ſays he, only ſome of our
ers, Herein Mr. Robe miſtakes the ſtory; for there are
inſtances in the hiſtory of the French Prophets, where

hundreds at a time who came to their assemblies, were presently affected, and seized with bodily agitations, and they pretended to the power of the Holy Ghost, as much as Mr. Robe can do for his hearers.

Lastly, Mr. Robe says, "That the exhortations of the Camizars to repentance and amendment of life, were without any mixture of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ. In ours a work of conviction is carried on to conversion, according to the doctrines of the gospel." Herein also Mr. Robe, in order to fix a disparity between his people and the Camizars, does them manifest injustice, for they pretended at least to sound doctrine, as Lacy in his Preface to the Cry from the Desart, says of them, page 13. "They all hold the truth as it is in Jesus: he is among them the foundation and corner stone. Whoever teaches a different gospel, and derogates from the honour of our Lord, let him be with us, Anathema maranatha. The two great commandments whereon hang all the law and the prophets, are urgently enforced in their extacies—and the scriptures directed to be read as the supreme rule of faith and manners." But as I shall agree with Mr. Robe, that the true gospel of Jesus Christ was far from being mixed with the exhortations of the Camizars, so I am afraid the same charge may be laid against many of the promoters of this work, amongst us, especially if we are to judge by the printed rhapsodies of Mr. Whitfield.

Thus we have seen that there is no disparity betwixt the Camizars, and the subjects of this extraordinary work amongst us, in the above particulars mentioned by Mr. Robe. I might further shew the exact resemblance between them in several other instances. The Camizars published Narratives of the wonderful work among them, just like Mr. Robe's narrative of the extraordinary work with him: only with this difference, that Mr. Lacy is so honest as to publish the names of the persons, who were the subjects of this awful delusion, Mr. Robe thinks fit, for very good reasons, to conceal the names of those he speaks of. Mr. Lacy publishes his account in the words of the persons themselves, and accordingly there is discernible variety of style. In Robe's narrative there is an exact uniformity of style, which renders it the more suspicious. Further the Camizars took upon them to exhort at their own hand, without any lawful calling, under a delusive pretence of inspiration; and it is well known that there have been several public exhorters among the subjects of this work both at home and abroad, whose success is mightily boasted of, particularly by Mr. *Webster*: *Let, page* 8. "Knowing the terror of the Lord they persuade men, having ratified also that he is gracious, they com-

mend his precious grace. Their labour of love is indefatigable: their ſucceſs great, inſomuch that numbers, now in a promiſing way, date their firſt concern from hearing others declare what God hath done for their ſouls." Although this practice has been owned by all ſound divines, to be a manifeſt ſtratagem of the devil, to diſcredit a ſtanding miniſtry. Again the ſame bodily agitations were to be found among the Camizars, as among the people here, the ſame noiſe and oſtentation, and upon all, the ſame pretended evidences of a work of God, and as ſolemn renunciation of the devil as having any ſhare in it.

For a proof of this, let us compare the evidences, that Mr. Webſter gives of divine influence as the true ſpring of this extraordinary work here, with the evidences which Sir Richard Buckley, and Mr. Lacy gives of the communication of the ſanctifying grace of God, to the ſouls of the Camizars, and we will find that they exactly hit, as face anſwereth face in a glaſs. Faithful account of the French prophets, page 22. "As to the communication of the ſanctifying grace of God to the ſouls of thoſe who believe in, and attend upon this diſpenſation; it is no unreaſonable requeſt that I make (ſays the above Sir Richard Buckley) in deſiring not to be bound down to anſwer for every individual perſon, that is outwardly a profeſſor — There was a Judas among the twelve, and an Ananias among them who ſold their eſtates to give to the poor. But as far as I can obſerve from the acquaintance of many months, it has in many produced theſe ſeveral effects, of meekneſs, patience under injuries, a contempt of the world, a dread and hatred of all ſin, a love and delight in ſecret prayer, and entire humility to the very duſt, an inſatible thirſt after continual attending upon the word of God in the aſſemblies, either praying to him, or hearing his word; an extenſive charity to mankind of all ſorts, and a comportment in the world agreeable thereto.—I can never have the leaſt doubt, or ſuſpicion, that ſo good and ſo conſtant operations, as the love of God, the hatred of one's ſelf, and a voluntary ſeparation of ſoul from the pleaſure of this life, a full contentment in the want of human conſolations, and joy in hardſhips (all which I have ſeen exemplified) could poſſibly proceed from an evil ſpirit." And ſays Mr. Lacy, *ibid, page* 42. "The Spirit inſiſting chiefly, and forcibly upon the great duties of ſincere and fervent love to God and man, and drawing all parties among us to an actual union, that ſilences all variance about party opinions, and brings the ſeveral acts, into one bond of affection under itſelf, doth thereby give another inſtance, wherein it favours not of infernal qualities, but rather of the holy uniting Spirit, which *animated the primitive* Chriſtians, and proceeds of that God

who is love itself. A Spirit exhorting its adherents to self-denial,—a spirit that takes away the occasions of pride in man, and by various ways of its operations tends to abase him thoroughly,—a spirit which gratifies not the particular corruptions and sinful infirmities of its followers; but on the contrary, puts them upon repeated performance of the opposite virtues.—And as hitherto I am assured of its good effects above mentioned, so while they continue witnessed by and felt in my own soul, I shall rather incur the displeasure of all the world than God's, by charging them on the devil." Now let us see how Mr. Webster proves that divine influence is the true spring of the extraordinary work at Cambuslang, &c. *Lett.* p. 7, 8, "You will readily ask what fruit have these things? Does their faith work by love? Yes, my friend, and that too in a remarkable manner. Their faith daily ripens into action—they esteem all God's precepts concerning all things to be right—the lives of the profane are visibly reformed—relative duties conscientiously discharged—the high praises of the Lord employ the tongue of blasphemers—praise is perfected out of the mouths of babes and sucklings—grosser sinners profess the greatest remorse for their acts of injustice—never did any converts appear endowed with more of a truly Christian spirit—their souls burn with love to God—to one another, and to all that bear the divine image. They cheerfully forgive their enemies, and wish well to their fellow creatures. Pag. 18. The devil himself were he not the father of liars would, methinks, be ashamed to call this his work, or claim the converts as his children. Pag. 24. Shall we believe the most glorious, the most substantial, the most real blessings, the product of a mere imagination, the offspring of a deluded brain! Thrice happy delusion! O my soul, may I ever be thus deceived, and ever feel the same blessed effects."

Now when these two accounts are stated and compared, where lies the difference? The evidence of a divine influence is as strong for the Camizars as for the subjects of this extraordinary work in the west of Scotland. The pretended effects are the same. For my part I can see no difference but this, that Mr. Webster's account is more threatrical, and consequently has more of fiction or invention, than the plain and simple account of the two gentlemen above-mentioned; and therefore since it is owned by all, that the Camizars, notwithstanding of all their pretended evidences of a divine influence, were under a manifest delusion, it follows that the people here, for whom no better evidence can be produced, must be under the same, *till it please* the Lord to give them a discovery of their mistake, *which I* hope and wish he will do in his own time.

ll now conſider the principles of the promoters of this eſpecially with reſpect to boundleſs toleration, and liber- conſcience. It has been conſtantly obſerved, that the iders of enthuſiaſm have ſtrenuouſly ſet up for a bound- erty to all ſects and opinions, eſpecially ſuch as relate to nt modes of government and policy in the church of The reaſon is obvious, for the government eſtabliſhed lſt in his houſe, is the beſt, yea the only fence againſt the and ſtrange doctrines that may happen to be advanced opagated to the prejudice of the truth as it is in Jeſus; erefore the ſtrong batteries of hell have been always plan- ainſt the walls and bulwarks of Zion, becauſe if a breach made on theſe, error and deluſion, and all manner of nation, have eaſy acceſs into the city of God. And ac- gly we find that the teſtimony and ſufferings of the church tland, ever ſince the reformation, have been chiefly ſtat- on the defence of that purity of Preſbyterial church gov- nt and diſcipline, which we happily attained unto, in op- on to a lordly prelacy upon the one hand, and ſectarian hy or confuſion on the other.

hen matters were come to that paſs in the church of Scot- of late years, that pleading with the judicature by inſtruc- petitions, and repreſentations, were not only utterly diſ- ded, but ſome of the now ſeceding miniſters ejected, for no reaſon, but becauſe they could not withdraw a proteſta- ntered before the General Aſſembly, 1733, for their juſt s and privileges as miniſters of the goſpel, to teſtify doc- lly and judicially againſt the defections of the times; there ſome miniſters about that time, who appeared ſomewhat us againſt the arbitrary meaſures that were then entered

Severals of them had in the year 1732, ſubſcribed a re- ntation, wherein the now ſeceding miniſters joined, and nted unto the Aſſembly the ſame year, for the redreſs of of the ſteps of defection, which are afterwards mentioned e Act and Teſtimony emitted by the Aſſociate Presbytery; h repreſentation was refuſed a hearing by that Aſſembly; reupon ſuch of the ſubſcribing miniſters as were preſent, ed a proteſtation for their exoneration, which was alſo re- l to be marked. The zeal that appeared in theſe miniſters hat time, made the brethren entertain ſuch a favourable ion of them, that when their ſeceſſion was firſt ſtated, . 1733, they declared their readineſs to hold communion h all ſuch who were adhering "to the principles of the true sbyterian covenanted church of Scotland, in her doctrine, ſhip, diſcipline and government, and who were affected with evils *complained of*, and were wreſtling againſt the ſame."

And afterwards in their declinature given to the A
1739, they "entreat and beſeech ſuch miniſters and eld
regard the covenanted teſtimony of the church of Scotla
for the love they bear to the honour and glory of the l
er and his deſpiſed truths, as alſo that hey may be in a
to tranſmit a faithful teſtimony to ſucceeding generati
come out from the preſent judicatories, and from all
rial communion with them, as they would not be part
their ſins.—That they would make uſe of the keys of
ment and diſcipline for the ends and purpoſes for which t
given them, and that they would put too their hands t
the ſtandard of a judicial teſtimony for the borne dow
of God."

But inſtead of all this, when the ſeceding miniſters
that theſe very brethren, who once appeared to conte
them, for the very ſame ſteps of reformation, went i
grees into the meaſures of the times, that their former
only abated, but they juſtified or extenuated theſe ſtep
feſtion they complained of before; that they were ſo
teſtifying doctrinally and judicially againſt the ſame, th
found ſilence took place anent theſe matters, and ſca
other grievance publicly lamented among them, but th
were a ſeceſſion from the preſent judicatures, and a
teſtimony againſt their defections and proceedings. T
thren, I ſay, obſerving all this, and finding that thei
ters were peaceably incorporated with intruders, a
as have been active in carrying on a courſe of defec
tolerating the erroneous, ſupporting and countenancin
and by enacting laws and conſtitutions contrary to the
Zion's King, whereby miniſterial freedom is ſuppre
and unwarrantable terms of miniſterial and chriſtian co
impoſed, and whereby the heritage of God is oppreſſed
ken, and likewiſe with ſuch as have ſubordinated th
unto the civil powers in their eccleſiaſtical meetings, fi
and adminiſtrations, and practically given up with t
ing of the King of Zion, by reading in one ſhape or
Act of Parliament anent Capt. John Porteous; this l
caſe, that they were all ſilently incorporated as ab
ſeceding miniſters could not with a ſafe conſcience hold
nion with them any longer; which by the by, is a
anſwer to what Mr. Webſter is pleaſed to ſuggeſt to t
deration of the Aſſociate Presbytery, *Lett.* p. 13, an
refuſing to hold communion with theſe miniſters wh
once looked upon as a contending party.

Some of them I know were well enough ſatisfied
ſeceſſion at firſt, and would have been ſo to this day

they were not for running any hazard themſelves, by joining therein, providing the ſeceding Miniſters could have chicaned and diſſembled ſo far, as to ſupport their popularity, by joining with them, and encouraging the people to cleave to them, while in the mean time they were reſolved to ſcreen themſelves from the ſtorm, and indolently wait for better days. When they were thus diſappointed, and being reſolved not to run the riſque of church cenſures, by joining in the preſent teſtimony, and finding a good number of ſolid and experienced Chriſtians through the land deſerting their miniſtry, they at length fall upon this ſtratagem, viz. That the ſeveral points of the preſent teſtimony, are not among the fundamentals or eſſentials of chriſtianity; that they are ſuch as great and good men have differed about, and therefore people ought not to forſake the miniſtry of good men, although they cannot come the length of eſpouſing the teſtimony the brethren are contending for. There are good men of all opinions, and therefore the brethren's teſtimony, and their refuſing to join with good men of all denominations, is nothing but bigotry and party zeal.

In order to propagate this principle, (which is thought to be the beſt mean to break the ſeceſſion,) Mr. George Whitefield is fallen upon as the moſt proper tool, and he, finding that it would promote his ſecular intereſt, which now appears in the eyes of all ſober thinking men, to be his proper aim, greedily embraces the opportunity; for as I ſhall preſently ſhew, the Aſſociate Preſbytery did not invite him to Scotland. However when it was found that the bait was like to take, his miniſtrations and ſucceſs are mightily cried up, his doctrine and art imitated, as far as ſome miniſters could, till at length the ſame fatal deluſion took place here, which has overſpread a great part of our American Colonies; and then preſently the cry is raiſed, That God is now remarkably owning the miniſters of the eſtabliſhed church, notwithſtanding all the evils complained of; he is crowning their miniſtrations with remarkable ſucceſs, nations are born in one day by their means; there is no ſuch countenance given to the Aſſemblies of the Seceders; and therefore the conſequence is, the people ought to diſown them, whom God is diſowning. God is now teſtifying that there was no ground for ſeceding from the eſtabliſhed church, when he is holding fellowſhip with her in ſuch a viſible and open manner.

This argument was mightily improved, and no doubt had influence upon ſome of the ſimple and unwary; although it is no breach of charity to ſay, that the miniſters who reaſoned at this rate, were either under the power of a blind infatuation at the time, or were groſsly impoſing upon the people, when it was obvious to the obſervation of all, that they were going on in the

ſame courſe of backſliding from the Lord as formerly, and the people that were miſled, filled with the greateſt prejudice and averſion to any teſtimony for the reformation principles of this church. But as breaking the ſeceſſion was the grand plot, ſo in order thereto we find the above vain-glorious boaſting running through all their public papers. Says Mr. Robe to the Aſſociate Preſbytery, Pref. page 18. "Can you be unaffected with the glory "of infinitely ſovereign grace, appearing towards a judgment "deſerving generation, as to ſay, you do well to fret and be angry, becauſe you find your glory leſſened by it, and your credit beginning to ſuffer." To the ſame purpoſe, Mr. Webſter ſpeaking likewiſe of the Seceding miniſters, Lett. p. 14. "What "then, if God is now teſtifying his diſpleaſure, by not crowning their own labours with the wiſhed ſucceſs? Or may he not, "even in pity to them, remarkably countenance the miniſtry of "ſome they deſpiſed, that they may henceforth learn not ſo "raſhly to call theſe God has ſanctified, common and unclean?" And p. 45. "It may teach the Aſſociate Preſbytery not to limit "the holy One of Iſrael in the diſpenſation of his grace; and "that God hath yet made choice of our Zion, and delights to "dwell within the gates of our Jeruſalem. And ſhould make "them more cautious in ſeparating from thoſe whom the great "Maſter of aſſemblies condeſcends to countenance ſo remarkably with his preſence." This is plain dealing; but now is a diſcovery of the whole ſecret. This work muſt be cried up as an undeniable evidence of God's dwelling within the gates of the eſtabliſhed church, and countenancing them remarkably with his preſence; and this as the laſt ſhift, muſt be improven to the beſt advantage to bear down the ſeceſſion. But as the Lord in his great mercy, hath by this time made it evident to the whole kingdom, that theſe prophets hath ſeen a lying divination, ſo I need ſay the leſs upon it; only I cannot miſs to obſerve that they have taken the moſt effectual way to perpetuate the lamentable effects of this deluſion. For in order to ſecure the people in all time coming from joining the Seceders, or ever appearing zealous for Preſbyterian church government, all pains are taken to perſuade them, that a teſtimony for the ſame is nothing but mere bigotry; that they may be good people whatever denomination they are of, and therefore they ought not to be taken up with theſe leſſer things, but only about the vitals of religion, wherein the matters of church government hath no concern. It is plain that this doctrine opens a wide door for boundleſs toleration, and liberty of conſcience; yet that this is *the leading* principle of the promoters of this work both *abroad* and at home, ſhall be ſhewn by their own writings.

I ſuppoſe it cannot be reaſonably refuſed, that Mr. White*field* is the chief human inſtrument and promoter of this work;

end indeed by his faſcinating art he has gained conſiderably by it. I might therefore begin with conſidering his catholic ſcheme of univerſal love and communion of all churches, which is built upon this falſe principle, that there is no foundation in ſcripture or reaſon for any particular form of church government by another. But the pernicious tendency of this ſcheme, for unhinging all true religion in the world, and advancing Satan's kingdom and intereſt therein, has been detected to much excellent purpoſe, from Mr. Whitfield's own writings, by the rev. Mr. Gib, that I need only refer the reader to the appendix of his Warning, where he will find full ſatisfaction upon this ſubject.

I proceed therefore to ſhew, that all the ſubordinate promoters of this work, embrace and propagate the ſame principle with their famous leader Mr. Whitefield. We may eaſily judge of the principles maintaining by Mr. Gilbert Tennent, and other adherents of Mr. Whitefield of the preſbyterian denomination in New England, from the above mentioned Proteſtation preſented to the Synod of Philadelphia, where it is ſaid, page 9. "That they ex-"preſsly deny that Preſbyteries and Synods have authority, or "ſhould go any farther in judging of appeals or references, &c. "than to give their beſt advice. Which, ſay the proteſting min-"iſters, is plainly to diveſt the officers and judicatures of Chriſt's "kingdom of all authority, and plainly contradicts our Confeſ-"ſion of Faith, chap. 31. § 3."

That Mr. Gilbert Tennent in particular is entirely moulded into Mr. Whitefield's catholic ſcheme of blending all religious ſocieties into one, to make up a ſynagogue of Satan out of all, will appear from Whitefield's character of him, Remarks, &c. p. 8. "I have the happineſs of being perſonally and very intimate-"ly acquainted with Mr. Tennent. I ſcarce know a man of a "more catholic ſpirit." Mr. Whitefield ſhews, Rem. page 24. how far Meſſrs. Prince, Webb and Cowper, three Boſton miniſters, are from bigotry in their preface to Mr. Gregere's ſermon, which concludes thus: "And our earneſt wiſhes, that with a "tender and meek forbearance of each other in different ſenti-"ments about church order, and government, we may all unite "in maintaining and promoting theſe more excellent and momen-"tous points of grace and vital piety." That Mr. Edwards is the ſame principle may be ſeen from the cloſe of his ſermon on the marks of a work of a true Spirit. Mr. Harris ſpeaks without diſguiſe, Weekly Hiſt. No. 14. "Since we cannot come to "underſtand ſome texts about church government, and about "the time or mode of baptiſm, and ſome other little externals, "that are ſoon to periſh, all miniſters of every perſuaſion, ſhould, "lend their pulpits to each other alternately, never touching on "thoſe things they cannot ſee alike." This was exactly the *dialect of the formaliſts* and other enthuſiaſts of the laſt century.

Now as the work is owned to be the ſame abroad and at home

ſo we find the promoters thereof in Scotland all ſpeaking in the ſame ſtrain, and propagating the ſame lax and anarchical principles with their brethren above mentioned. The Rev. Mr. Williſon at Dundee, in the poſtſcript of his letter, Weekly Hiſt. No. 13. "Many with us are for preferring miniſters according "to the party they are of." That is, there are many ſound Preſbyterians in Scotland who prefer a Preſbyterian miniſter, to thoſe of the Epiſcopal or other denominations, and among the Preſbyterians in name, they prefer thoſe who hold ſtrictly to their principles. "But commend me (ſays he) to a pious, Chriſt "exalting, and ſoul winning miniſter, whatever be his denom-"ination". That is, ſuppoſe a man were a Jeſuit, and has the outward appearance of ſanctity, and if any ſucceſs attend his miniſtrations upon the external morals of the people, he is equally acceptable to Mr. Williſon with thoſe of his own denomination. How the Rev. Mr. Williſon will be capable to reconcile this principle, with his cleaving to our covenants, national and ſolemn league, which he profeſſes to do in that letter, I know not, I am afraid that ſuch a profeſſion will be looked upon by the impartial, to be mere artifice.

The Rev. Mr. Ogelvie at Aberdeen, another promoter of this work, is far from diſſembling his keeneſs for toleration principles. Weekly Hiſt. No. 28. "We have been of late much em-"ployed, and a great noiſe has been made about the leſſer mat-"ters of the law, and are now much broken in judgment about "things many of which I muſt own, I do not well underſtand." The leſſer matters of the law, which Mr. Ogelvie ſays he does not well underſtand, are theſe little externals of church government, which his friend Mr. Howel Harris abovementioned profeſſes to be very indifferent about. That this is Mr. Ogelvie's plain meaning, appears from his character of Mr. Whitefield; "His attachment to no party but Chriſt, and true grace alone, "has long appeared to me a peculiar excellency in him." No party but Chriſt! I tremble at the blaſphemy of dreſſing up the the Lord of glory in the monſtrous garb of Mr. Whitefield's ſcheme; and therefore I dare not uſe the freedom of putting that bold expreſſion in plainer language; however it is obvious by that other expreſſion, true grace alone, that the truth relative to the government and order of the houſe of God, are with Mr. Ogelvie matters of mere indifference; and therefore according to him, not worth the contending for, becauſe no way eſſential to ſalvation. I am glad to find that the abſurdity of this dangerous doctrine has been expoſed, and an open teſtimony given againſt it, by the Rev. Mr. John Beſſet, miniſter of the goſpel at Aberdeen, in a ſermon of his lately printed there, wherein he ſolidly refutes that doctrine which is now ſo current, of ranking any of the truth's of Chriſt among indifferencies,

and gives a plain and juſt character of Mr. Whitefield, which deſerves the attention of the public, p. 67. "Terrible it is to "me, ſays he, to bring in any of the things of Chriſt into the "claſs of indifferencies, by which it muſt come to this ſome-"times to lay aſide Chriſt's commandments, for no better rea-"ſon, than becauſe the thing required, is not eſſential to ſalva-"tion; or to this ſometimes to prefer a human device to a "commandment of Chriſt; for if both be in the claſs of in-"differences, it is at your diſcretion, which of them you chooſe "or refuſe at this or that time. How dangerous this is I muſt "ſhew at large; but though I or an angel from heaven, ſhould "teach you any other doctrine, (namely the doctrine of indiffer-"encies) we corrupt the doctrine of Chriſt. I will anſwer for "this I preach, as being Chriſt's truth, in the day that you and "I ſhall ſtand naked at his tribunal, and I will anſwer for it "as neceſſary and ſeaſonable truth, whoever of a miniſter of Sa-"tan, transforming himſelf into a miniſter of Chriſt, may of "late have poiſoned many of this deluded land with the contra-"ry. How appoſitely may I repeat here part of a letter from "the great Mr. Rutherford to the profeſſors in Ireland. It is "not poſſible, ſays he, to compound a matter betwixt Chriſt "and Antichriſt. It was man's wit and the wit of Prelates, and "their god-father the Pope, to put Chriſt and his prerogative-"royal and truths, and the ſmalleſt nail breadth of his latter "will, in the new calender of indifferencies, and to make a blank "of unlinked paper in Chriſt's Teſtament, that men fill up, and "ſo ſhuffle the truth, and matters they called indifferent through "other, and ſpin both together, that Antichriſt's wares may ſell "the better." From which the Rev. Mr. Biſſet ſubſumes, "What would this great Seer have ſaid to thoſe of our day, "who liſten to every ſtrolling impoſter and cheat (meaning Mr. "Whitfield) who would card Chriſt's truth, and their own er-"rors through other, that Antichriſt's wares may ſell the bet-"ter." I hope the reader will be well pleaſed with this quo-tation, that he will not grudge the length of it.

I believe none will ſuſpect, that the Rev. Meſſrs. Robe and Webſter, who are ſuch zealous promoters of this work, will be behind any of the former in declaring for the anarchical ſcheme, or a boundleſs liberty of conſcience with reſpect to the princi-ples of church government. Any who have read Mr. Webſter's letter may obſerve how contemptuouſly he ſpeaks of the govern-ment and diſcipline of the houſe of the houſe of God, page 30. "A perſon under alarming apprehenſions of divine wrath, can-"not with much ſedateneſs of mind peruſe the endleſs volumes "that *have been* wrote on viſible external forms. What would "*you think of his* convictions for ſin, who made church gov-"*ernment his firſt* inquiry? Would he not be as reaſonable

"and profitably employed in reading Mr. Guthrie's Tryal, &c. "as ſtudying public acts and teſtimonies." Now granting that the doctrine concerning the government of the church, doth not fall under the inquiry of a perſon under conviction, at the firſt inſtance; yet I am perfectly ſure, that the Spirit of God, in his convincing work, doth not beget in any ſoul, an averſion to public acts and teſtimonies for the declarative glory of God, as evidently takes place in Mr. Webſter himſelf, and thoſe he is pleading for; what can he mean by the endleſs volumes that have been writ on viſible external forms; but that Preſbyterian church government has been mightily controverted and oppoſed, therefore it is worth no man's while to take up his head about it! And accordingly he gives two inſulting challenges from Mr. Robe's preface, with equal warmth to the Seceding miniſters. 1. "Dare any of you tell the moſt zealous for "your teſtimony, and againſt their own miniſters, that theſe "things are marks, and evidences of ſaving grace." Not to inſiſt upon the invective of calling it our teſtimony; I dare tell every one, that a zealous concern for a public teſtimony to the kingly office of Chriſt, and the privileges of his kingdom, is among the diſtinguiſhing evidences of ſaving grace, which we find all the ſaints in ſcripture had, every one of them being zealous for the teſtimony of their day. 2. "Dare any of you tell "them that the judging your teſtimony irregular, and their "cloſe conjunction with their own miniſters are certain evidences that they are Chriſtleſs and graceleſs who do ſo?" To which I anſwer, that if ſome perſons had no better evidence of their being in a ſtate of grace, than their judging the teſtimony, we were honoured to give to be irregular, and their cloſe conjunction with their own miniſters who are carrying on a courſe of defection; it would be no great breach of charity to ſay, that they are Chriſtleſs and graceleſs who do ſo.

As for the Rev. Mr. Robe; he inſiſts upon making the charges good, of his being of the above principles; and I find no difficulty in doing it: for, 1ſt. He plainly inſinuates, that the decay of practical godlineſs, formality in religion, and open immorality, are the only breaches of covenant, Pref. page 4. His words after mentioning the above evils, are, "All this was ob- "verſed by ſome, and looked upon as the cauſe of God's con- "troverſy with us, and what they feared would provoke him "to ſend ſome deſolating judgment to avenge the quarrel of his "thus broken covenant." Now if by covenant he means the covenant of duties, which this land once and again entered into, *both in our* national and ſolemn league and covenant, it is plain, *that he looks* upon all defections from Preſbyterial principles in *doctrine*, worſhip, diſcipline and government, to be no breaches *of theſe* covenants. This will appear if it is ſo conſidered.

2*d*, That he makes it one of Satan's devices for people to be exercised about public defection, which, says he, "either are not their sins, or among the least of them." But we find that, for the public sins of magistrates and ministers acting in their several capacities, wrath has been poured out upon the whole land, Micah iii. 11, 12. "The heads thereof "judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets "thereof divine for money, yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is "not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us. Therefore shall "Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become "heaps." And when people do not lament these public sins, they are "chargeable upon them. "All these things shall come upon this genera-"tion saith the Lord," Mat. xxiii. 36.

3*d*, He makes mismanagement in government and discipline to be no causes, or at least very inconsiderable ones, of the Lord's controversy with us; for he finds great fault with these, who complained of public defections and backslidings as the most crying sins, and alledges, "Here-"by they were led to overlook what was the greatest evil, and cause of "God's controversy with us, namely, the corruptions of the lives of the "members of this church." But I could wish Mr. Robe would remember, that the corruptions of the lives of church members flows chiefly, next to the depravation of their natures, from the corruptions of the ministry, Jer. xxiii. 14, 15. "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusa-"lem an horrible thing, they walk in lies, they strengthen also the hands "of evil doers. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, concerning the "prophets, Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them "drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is pro-"faneness gone forth into all the land." Verse 22. "But if they had "stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then "they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil "of their doings."

4*th*, Mr. Robe is pleased to call the defections of ministers and church judicatories, "disputable things, far from the vitals of religion," Pref. page 5. The speaking so diminutively of our public defections and matters relative to the government of the house of Christ, necessarily lands in scepticism, which is the native fruit of enthusiasm. Besides he goes upon a palpable mistake which I am afraid many inculcate upon their hearers, namely, that none who are taken up about the vitals of religion, will much concern themselves about the public cause of God; the very reverse of which is true.

Thus I have shewn that Mr. Robe is not a whit behind any of the above promoters of this work, in favouring and countenancing a boundless liberty of conscience, especially with respect to church government; and therefore since the charge is made good against him, I hope he will not henceforth reckon the Associate Presbytery slanderers, as he threatened to do, if they failed in their p· bation of this point. I find the attesters of the narrative of the extraordinary work at Cambuslang, speaking much in the same strain, commending the people there as free of bigotry and party zeal, and as having an "aversion to things that tend to strife, rather "than to edification." That is, an aversion to all testimonies for our Presbyterian church government and constitution. I cannot here omit a strange character that one of them gives the people at Cambuslang: Short Narrative, page 17. "All of them, says he, expressed the warmest "desires after an interest in Christ, to obtain which they said they would "cheerfully lay down their lives." Now unless he make them all of the *purgatorial or middle state scheme*, I freely own I know not what he *means by the expression.*

I come now in the laſt place to conſider Mr. Robe's addreſs to the Aſſociate Preſbytery. It is plain that ſuch public addreſſes are not deſigned for the conviction or edification of the party to whom they are made, but to expoſe them as far as poſſible to the ridicule of the world; and therefore I cannot allow myſelf to addreſs the reverend Mr. Robe in the like manner, eſpecially when his addreſs is written with ſo much of a ſpirit of bitterneſs, that it would rather tend to irritate than reclaim, ſhould I endeavour to imitate it. There is ſo little of ſolid reaſon, and of the perſuaſive, and ſo much of the invective in it, that I had not thought it worth my while to have given any return, were it not that I perceive the world is groſsly impoſed upon, by ſeveral falſe inſinuations that are made therein.

1ſt, He repreſents us to the world as men of bitter and malignant ſpirits, and himſelf and his brethren as men of the greateſt patience and moderation. Preface, page 15. "Whatever bitter names you and your party "give us, whatever bitter reproaches you lay upon us, we take all pa-"tiently: We would lay our bodies on the ground, and as the ſtreet for "you to go over, if it could in the leaſt contribute to remove your pre-"judices." The giving of bitter names, or caſting groundleſs reproaches on any, we abſolutely refuſe. If our teſtifying againſt the corrupt practiſes of miniſters and judicatories, and lamenting the ſame be reckoned a giving of bitter names, we cannot help it: But how far they have taken all patiently, when they have proceeded againſt us the length of depoſition and ejection, let the world judge. Have they laid their bodies as the ground for us to go over, when they have not only thruſt us from our charges, but have painted us out to the world as the ſole diſturbers of human ſociety, who ſcarce deſerve the common privileges of other ſubjects.

The thing I find that angers Mr. Robe and his party, is the late act of the Aſſociate Preſbytery anent a public faſt. This, ſays he, is "the moſt "heaven-daring paper that hath been publiſhed by any ſet of men in Bri-"tain theſe hundred years paſt." Strange! Is it more heaven daring than the papers publiſhed by Deiſts, Arians, Quakers, and other ſets of blaſphemers, that have been in Britain within leſs than an hundred years bygone? The reaſon of the charge is, "Therein you declare the work "of God to be a deluſion, and the work of the grand Deceiver." If we had done ſo, it had been an iniquity to be puniſhed by the judge; but as we never looked upon this to be the work of God, ſo I have already diſproved the evidences they alledge for its being ſo, and therefore it muſt remain to be a deluſion ſtill, till better evidences are adduced.

Mr. Robe alledges that we are not duly informed anent the nature and circumſtances of this work, becauſe none of us have been at Cambuſlang, Kelſyth, &c. Had there appeared the leaſt probability to us, of a gracious and remarkable work of God begun in theſe places, we ſhould have been the cheerful witneſſes, and rejoiced to have been plentiful ſharers of it among the firſt. But when we plainly ſaw, that the inſtruments and promoters thereof were ſo far from eſſaying any thing like reformation, that their utmoſt endeavours were employed to ſpite and baniſh any remaining inclinations of the people that way: when we were convinced that, though the extraordinary appearances that attended this work, ſuch as bodily agonies and exſtatic impulſes, were conformable to Mr. Whitefield's experience; yet contrary to the experiences of all the ſaints recorded in ſcripture, and no way agreeable to the method of the Spirit's operation as revealed there: When we had unqueſtionable proofs of the prejudice and enmity, with which the ſubjects of this work and the acts

thereof, were filled against our covenanted reformation, and all that ised the same, to an higher degree than ever was known in Scotland our persecuting times? When we observed the great noise and out- shew that was made of this work, the public proclamation of it gh all quarters of the world, and the vast ostentation and great swel- words wherewith this was published, so unlike the modesty and hu- y of true christians: When it was obvious that the promoters of this in Scotland, were not only embracing and propagating anarchichal oleration principles, but practically owning them, by joining in full nunion with Mr. Whitefield, a professed priest of the church of Eng- ; and, after all, lulling poor people fast asleep under the tokens of the 's anger, with the fatal allurement of a great work of God begun g them, as an undeniable proof of the Lord's presence with their lers, notwithstanding of all that the Seceders have said against them: word, when it was perfectly evident that the whole work was man- and carried on, for bearing down any testimony for Scotland's cov- ed reformation; when all this was abundantly clear to the Seceding lers, would Mr. Robe have them to come and see, especially when g in ministerial communion, was a necessary preliminary to any fat- ion that might be expected? Or in case they had been in any doubt, at purpose to come and seek information from these ministers, who before hand given it out in the strongest terms, to be an extraordi- work of the Spirit of God, a prelude to the glorious things promised e church in the last times? It is plain in this case, the Seceding min- behoved to give implicit faith to the whole, or be accounted blas- ers, as Mr. Robe calls them, Preface, page 16 and is so modest as y that they are come too near to the unpardonable sin. However, we were not in the least doubt about the nature and tendency of work, I would ask Mr. Robe, if it would not have been as much our to go to a Quaker meeting to be informed whether they are agita- with the true spirit, or by a Satanical impulse, since it is notour that pretences to a divine influence run as high as others?

r. Robe is pleased to adorn his address with a very idle story, which ly discovers with what manner of spirit he writes. Preface, p. 16. re of your party who had consulted one of your number, said, that he thought the Spirit of God would come by the ministers of this urch, he would not own it." This is a very calumnious insinuation, one of our members has given it as his opinion, that if he thought the Spirit of God would come by the ministers of this church, he d not own it. I can freely say for every one of our number, that ould gladly rejoice to see the Spirit of God poured out upon the min- of this church, reforming and reclaiming them, in which case we d be of one heart and one way. I would not have given the reader rouble about this story, if it were not to let the world see upon what dation they build the aspersions they cast so liberally upon the Sece-

The plain matter of fact was this: One George Findlay, a Seceder e parish of Kelsyth, having one of his friends seized with this work, ainted the rev. Mr. Erskine at Sterling therewith; but no such thing d betwixt them as is above represented, nor any thing said by Mr. ine that could lay the least foundation for such an unguarded speech. the said George Findlay, happening to have an interview with one ander Allen, who was once among the Seceders of that parish, but ining to Mr. Robe, is now accounted by him, to be the only man of consideration as to serious religion that was among them; this man o Findlay, "*You think* this work a plain delusion, for if you thought *was the Spirit of the Lord*, you would go and countenance it."

Upon which George Findlay replied, "Although that I was perſuaded "from the word of God, that it were the ſaving work of the Spirit of God, "I do not ſee my warrant from the word, to bury a teſtimony for truth, "and return to the eſtabliſhment as yet; for if it be the work of God's "Spirit, I am in no doubt but the Aſſociate Preſbytery and the Eſtabliſh- "ment will meet, for it is the Lord's work the Aſſociate Preſbytery is "contending for, and will be made to own." Now will this bear ſuch a gloſs as Mr. Robe puts on it? Or will it follow, becauſe Findlay was once in company with the reverend Mr. Erſkine, that he adviſed him to ſay as Mr. Robe relates? And if Allan has told Mr. Robe the ſtory as he prints it, I muſt ſay it is no great evidence that he is of ſuch conſideration for ſerious religion, as Mr. Robe repreſents.

But I find it is faſhionable with the party to receive and hand about reports of the Seceders, however falſe and ridiculous: one inſtance of many ſhall ſuffice: There are hundreds of Mr. Robe's party, who I doubt not have conſulted with more than one of his number, who ſaid that one of Mr. Fiſher's elders came to him with his daughter under ſome ſpiritual diſorder, and he having converſed with her gave it as his opinion to her father, that it was a work of God upon her ſoul; but being told that it was at Cambuſlang ſhe was touched, he ſaid, if that was the caſe, it muſt certainly be a deluſion: This ſtory is no doubt deſigned, to repreſent Mr. Fiſher in the blackeſt colours, and accordingly they have printed it in one of their anonymous pamphlets, as what they have certain information of, and continue to hand it about with the greateſt confidence. But I hereby aſſure the world that it is entirely falſe, and that there was never any foundation for it.

Mr. Robe, in finding fault with the act of Preſbytery for mentioning viſions, voices, and revelations among the uſual ſymptoms of a deluſive ſpirit, ſays, page 16 "None of our people, who are come to relief by "faith in Chriſt, pretend to them." There is too much of deceit here; for the queſtion is not whether they who come to relief by faith in Chriſt pretend to them; but whether they who are the ſubjects of this work who have undergone bodily pains and convulſions do not likewiſe pretend to viſions, voices, and revelations? It is moſt certain that many of them do, as can be proved by unnumerable witneſſes, who have heard them own ſo much; and Mr. Edwards is ſo ingenuous as to acknowledge that they appertain to the extraordinary work, and vindicate them as flowing from the Spirit of God, though indirectly, Diſt. Marks, page 27, 28. Mr. Robe adds, "Can you ſay that ſound divines maintain that bodily diſtreſſes are "inconſiſtent with a ſaving work of the Spirit of God? if you had ſaid "thus, and proven it, you would have ſaid ſomething; but this is what "you could not, what you durſt not."

I could wiſh the rev. Mr. Robe would for the future learn to ſpeak ſomewhat more diſcreetly. I have already ſhewn from Mr. Edwards that the riſe of theſe bodily agitations and agonies, is not only antiſcriptural, but diabolical, and therefore every ſound divine muſt maintain in theſe circumſtances, that they are inconſiſtent with a ſaving work of the Spirit of God at the time; though I do not refuſe, that ſome ſuch perſons may afterwards be the ſubjects of the Spirit's gracious operations.

There are a great many other hard ſpeeches, and bitter invectives againſt the Aſſociate Preſbytery in Mr. Robe's addreſs, which I entirely paſs, and forgive. And as I have already conſidered all that he ſays *againſt the act of Preſbytery*, in vindication of his extraordinary work, ſo *I ſhall have done with him*, after I have taken notice of what he ſays anent *Mr. Whitefield*, and vindicate the act of Preſbytery in what is therein ſo *juſtly alledged* againſt that perſon.

Mr. Robe ſays, Preface, page 20. "I do not meddle at this time with "that part of your paper concerning the rev. Mr. George Whitefield, "whom I love in the truth. Only I am of opinion, that he ſhould do "juſtice ſo far to himſelf, and the miniſters of the church of Scotland, as "to ſet what paſſed betwixt you and him in a juſt light." Whatever juſtice Mr. Whitefield thinks he has done to himſelf, and the miniſters of the church of Scotland, yet I will make it appear, that he has impoſed intolerably upon the world in the letter he has publiſhed, *Weekly Hiſtory*, *No.* 37. in anſwer to that part of the act of Preſbytery relative to him; "As to what they ſay about the ſupremacy, ſays he, my ſentiments as "to the power and authority of the civil magiſtrates, as to ſacred things, "agree with what is ſaid in the Weſtminſter Confeſſion of Faith, chap. "23. and 34. And I own the Lord Jeſus to be the bleſſed Head, and "King of his church. The Solemn League and Covenant I never abjur-"ed, neither was it ever propoſed to me to be abjured." That every body may ſee with their own eyes what Mr. Whitefield's conduct has been, which he here ſo Jeſuitically diſſembles, I ſhall tranſcribe what follows from the form and manner of making, ordering, and conſecrating biſhops and prieſts, and deacons of the church of England: "Before the goſpel, "the biſhop, ſitting in his chair, ſhall cauſe the oath of the king's ſupre-"macy be miniſtered unto every one of the deacons that are to be order-"ed, or ordained, the tenor whereof follows: "I —— do utterly teſtify "and declare in my conſcience, that the king's highneſs is the only ſu-"preme governor of this realm, and of all other his highneſs' dominions, "and countries, as well in all ſpiritual or eccleſiaſtical things or cauſes, "as temporal. And do promiſe that to my power I ſhall aſſiſt and defend "all juriſdictions, privileges, preeminencies, and authorities granted, "or belonging to the king's highneſs, or annexed to the imperial crown "of this realm: So help me God, and the contents of this book."— The ſaid oath is repeated again when they are ordained prieſts; and the following queſtion, among others, put to them: "Will you reverendly "obey your ordinary, and other chief miniſters unto whom is committed "the charge and government over you? Anſwer, I will do ſo, the Lord "being my helper."

Now, when Mr. Whitfield was ſworn once and again, that the King is ſupreme governor in all ſpiritual or eccleſiaſtical things or cauſes, and that this is one of the privileges, and preeminencies of the crown, and never has profeſſed the leaſt ſorrow for ſo doing, with what face can he ſay, that he agrees with the above paſſage of the Confeſſion of Faith, wherein it is expreſsly aſſerted, "The civil magiſtrate may not aſſume "to himſelf the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven." And conſequently it is impoſſible he can own the Lord Jeſus to be the Head of his church, in a conſiſtency with the above oath without manifeſt equivocation. As for his ſaying that it was never propoſed to him to abjure the ſolemn League and Covenant, this is alſo a mere blind; for had it been formally propoſed to him, he will not refuſe that he had freedom to do it. But he could not but know, that by the act of uniformity, the Solemn League and Covenant was appointed to be abjured by all eccleſiaſtical perſons in England for the ſpace of twenty years from 1662 to 1682, and held to be abjured to this day; in teſtimony whereof the ſaid act for uniformity is ordinarily prefixed to the ſeveral editions of the common prayer. Beſides Mr. Whitefield has effectually abjured the Solemn League and Covenant, by ſwearing the above oath of ſupremacy, and engaging at his *ordination to be ſubject* to the hierarchy of the church of England, *in direct oppoſition to the expreſs* terms of the Solemn League.

Mr. Whitefield alledges, that if his miſſives to the members of the Aſſociate Preſbytery were printed, the world would ſee, they had no reaſon to expect that he would act in any other manner than he has done. I ſhall be ſatisfied how ſoon theſe miſſives on both ſides be printed: From them it will appear, that the Aſſociate Preſbytery, were ſo far from inviting Mr. Whitefield to Scotland, that when he notified his deſign of coming to this kingdom, they plainly ſignified to him, that unleſs he embraced the reformation principles of this church, it would not be for the edification of the body of Chriſt, and accordingly wrote him at large an account of our Preſbyterian principles. He, upon the other hand, ſignified, that he was willing to ſit at the feet of the Aſſociate Preſbytery, and learn the way of Chriſt more fully, and that he was perhaps more of our mind than we knew; and a great many other ſmooth and decoying ſpeeches to that purpoſe, which made ſome of the brethren at that time imagine, that he would at leaſt lie open to light anent embracing preſbyterian principles. But they found it quite otherwiſe when he came; for in the conference which ſome members of the Preſbytery had with him at Dunfermline, Auguſt 5th, 1741, he would not ſo much as hearken to reaſoning upon the head of preſbyterian church government.

Mr. Whitefield is not ſo ingenuous as to give an account of this conference; he only ſums it up in the ſame calumnious inſinuation with Mr. Robe, that the Aſſociate Preſbytery would have been glad of his help, and to have received him into communion with them as a miniſter of Chriſt, without any other terms, but his promiſing to preach only at their invitation, or the invitation of the people. Now, by the copy of the conference written by the brethren there preſent, juſt now before me, it appears, that they were ſo far from being glad of his help, upon no other terms than his preaching at their invitation, that the firſt ſubject of converſation propoſed by them, was anent the government of the church, that they might know whether he was lying open to light upon that point or not, before they could entertain thoughts of hearing or employing him. He wanted to ſhift this converſation entirely, and to talk about toleration principles. When the brethren urged, by ſeveral arguments, a converſation upon the former ſubject in the firſt place, then he told them plainly, that he had no difficulty about it, that he was of the communion of the church of England, and was reſolved to continue ſo till they thruſt him out. Whereupon the queſtion was ſtated, Whether in theſe circumſtances, when Mr. Whitefield declared himſelf of the communion of the church of England, and his reſolution to continue in it, and refuſing to lie open to light on that head, the brethren could hold miniſterial communion with him? After one of the members had at great length, upon this ſtate of the queſtion, ſhewn the oppoſition both of Epiſcopacy and Independency to the word of God, and the ſolemn oath of the three nations, and Mr. Whitefield after all utterly averſe to receive light upon that ſubject, the brethren therenpon reſolved, that they would not hear him preach, nor employ him. This is only a ſhort account of a plain matter of fact. The converſation at large, if needful, ſhall be expoſed to public view.

Quædam deſunt.

FINIS.

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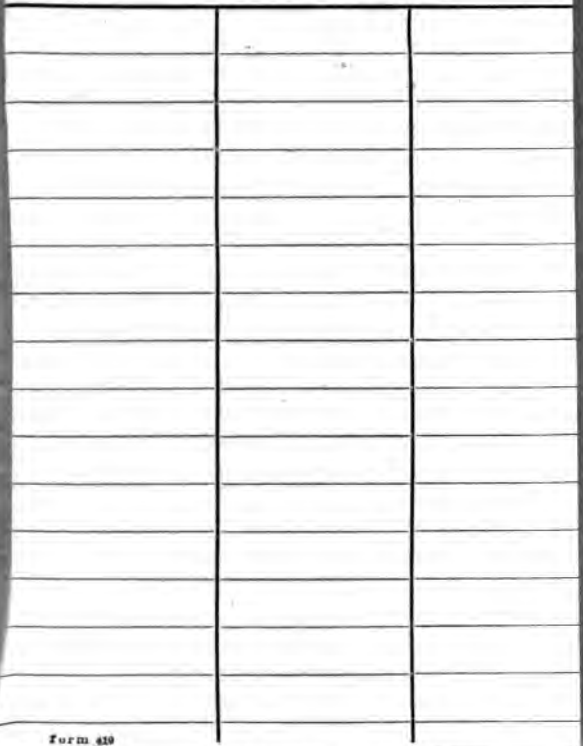
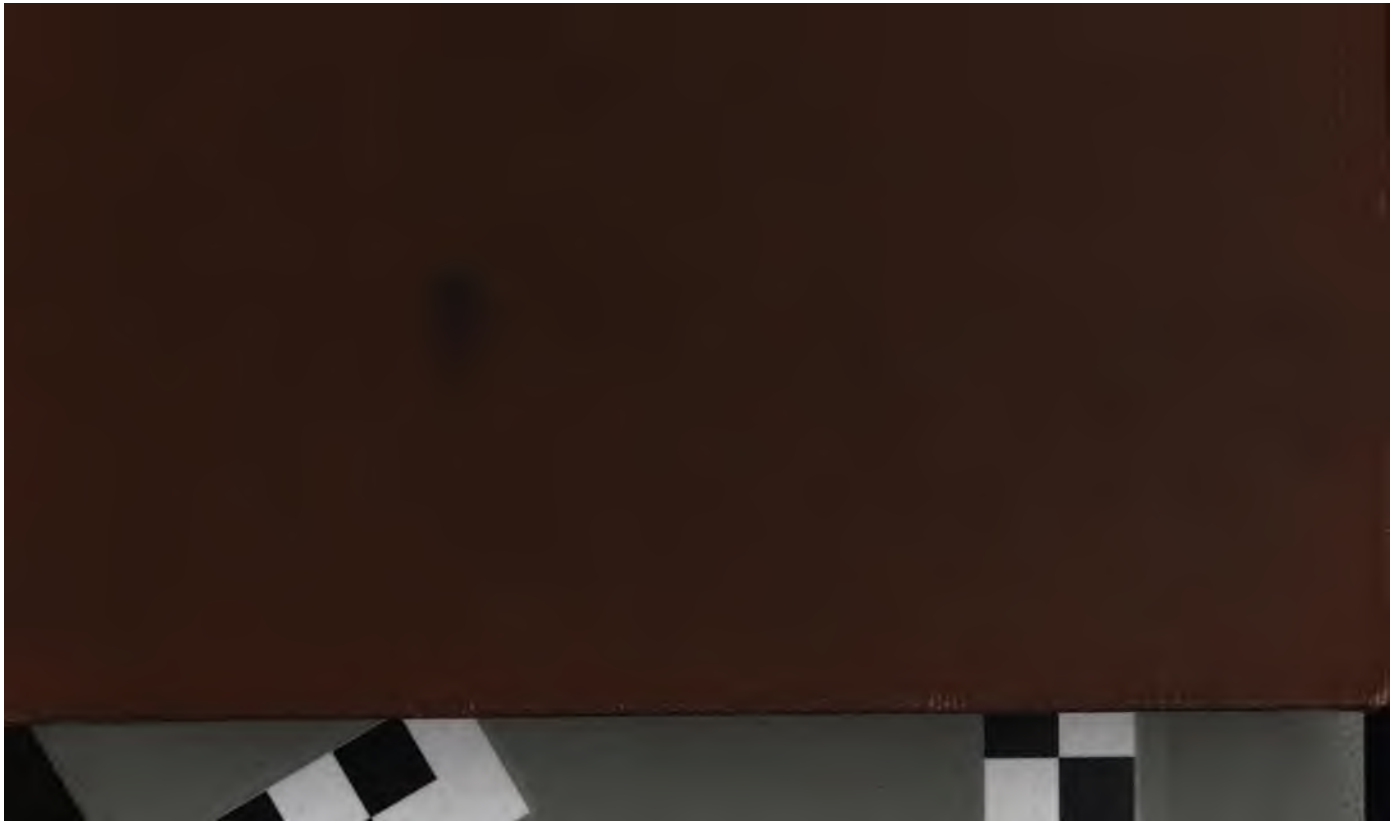
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